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# A Memoir

OF THE

# REV. JOHN KEBLE, M.A.

LATE VICAR OF HURSLEY.

BY THE RIGHT HON.

## SIR J. T. COLERIDGE, D.C.L.

"Te mihi junxerunt nivei sine crimine mores,
Simplicitasque sagax, ingenuusque pudor;
Et bene nota fides, et candor frontis honestæ,
Et studia a studiis non aliena meis."

*Joannes Secundus.*

VOL. I.

Second Edition,
With Corrections and Additions.

OXFORD and LONDON:
JAMES PARKER AND CO.
1869.

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OXFORD

*TO*

## *SIR WILLIAM HEATHCOTE, BART.*

*My dear Heathcote,*

*IN placing your name at the head of this Memoir, I fulfil a plain and pleasant duty. I dedicate it to a favourite pupil of John Keble; who became his fast friend; and was his only patron.*

*I wish I could feel secure that the Memoir does no injustice to his memory. Such as it is I present it to you, as flowing at least from a grateful heart. To him I owe more than I can well express; and among the greater of those many obligations I count it not the least, that for so many years I have been able to call myself your affectionate and faithful friend,*

*J. T. COLERIDGE.*

*HEATH'S COURT,*
*Dec.* 26, 1868.

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# PREFACE

## TO THE SECOND EDITION.

SOON after the death of John Keble, a letter was written to his nearest and dearest surviving relative, by one who knew him as well as he loved him. I venture to print the following extract :—

"I suppose that no man has died in England within our memory who has been so dearly loved, and whose memory will be had in such tender reverence by so many good men. It will be long before many will cease to say to themselves when in doubt, 'What would Keble say to this?' or to remind themselves of his ways and sayings; and of Hursley as it was in his time; and of all that made his judgment a law, and his companionship delightful. However, I think it is not the companionship that comes most into the mind just now. What I think remarkable, was not how many people loved him, or how much they loved him, but that everybody seemed to love him with the very best kind of love of which they were capable.

"It was like loving goodness itself; you felt that what was good in him was applying itself directly and bringing into life all that was best in you. His ready, lively, transparent affection seemed as if it was the very spirit of love, opening out upon you, and calling for a return, such as you could give. At the same time its unsuspectingness was almost alarming. *You* were probably too near to him to know that singular mixture of triumph and shame which, I think, he caused to many of his friends, by the unreserved

affection which he poured out upon them, on the faith of their possessing all the singleness and purity of heart which he felt in himself. But it was, I think, very common; and I believe that numbers of persons were continually urged forwards by a kind of shame at feeling themselves so much behind what he appeared to think of them.

"His influence for some time has been so silent, that one hardly knows what his loss may be to the Church. But it is impossible not to fear that many people will be liable to do wild or angry things, when they are relieved from that silent control which was exercised by the general reverence which all men felt for him. However, that is in Higher Hands."

There is not a syllable of exaggeration in this beautiful extract; and it is owing to the general feeling, so well described in it, that I find myself called on to prepare a second edition of this book very long before I had any expectation of such a call being made on me; and a sense of this has naturally made me more anxious to correct some inaccuracies which had crept into the former edition. This I have endeavoured to do.

But beside inaccuracies as to facts, friends have suggested in private, and critics through the press have pointed out, what seem to them omissions, or faults in the conception of the work as well as in the execution. In some respects it will be found, I hope, that attention has been paid to such remarks; and where it has not been, this must not be attributed to want of respect, or consideration. This indeed would have been unpardonable in me;

for so far as I know, I have been treated even by the most decided of my critics with a respect and kindness which I wish I deserved, and for which I feel sincerely grateful. Sometimes, however, I have not agreed with my advisers, sometimes I have found myself unable to do what they desired. There are faults I suppose in every work, which are so interwoven with the main web that they cannot be removed without unravelling the whole piece. I am too old to recast the work; and I desire it should be borne in mind, that from the beginning I expressly limited myself to a certain part, and did not undertake the whole of Keble's history.

I must now mention some new matter, which will be found in this edition. Since the issue of the former, two parcels of letters have been found, the one to Hurrell Froude, the other to his father, the Archdeacon; they were found singularly enough with a small quantity of plate, and some personal jewels of little value, in a house formerly the property of the latter, and for many years occupied by his sister, which is now the property of Mr. William Froude. He was good enough to place them unreservedly in my hands; and I have published a few, which will be found in their proper places. All are written in the same spirit, and with the same ability, which are characteristic of the letters I had before printed; and should it be thought right to publish an independent selection of his letters, many of them I hope will be found in it.

A more important addition will be found in the Appendix, which I have annexed to this volume. This mainly consists of papers from which I made extracts in my concluding chapter. I have thought it better now on many accounts to print them at length ; by so doing I am aware some repetition will appear, and it will be seen, I fear, not only that I was too sparing, but also that I was injudicious in my selection. By printing them as I now do, I shall give a more adequate view of the inward and domestic life of Keble, the want of which has justly been complained of; and I can more conveniently place the purchasers of the first edition on a footing with those who may possess themselves of the second, as copies of this appendix will be printed separately for their convenience.

J. T. C.

HEATH'S COURT,
*April* 24, 1869.

# PREFACE

## TO THE FIRST EDITION.

SO much time has elapsed since it was understood that I had commenced the work which I now publish, and in itself it might seem to have required so little, that a few words of explanation may be proper; and but a few will be all that I can offer. When I undertook my task, some of my best friends doubted whether I had still strength of body or mind sufficient for it. Beginning it with perhaps too much eagerness and anxiety, it was not long before I was stopped by an illness, some effects of which have never wholly left me—one of them has been the inability, sometimes, to work at all—and always to do so for more than a short period of time from day to day.

This will be accepted, I hope, as an excuse for delay; what effects the same circumstance may have had on the book itself, it is useless for me to consider; no explanation will cure its faults, or supply its short-comings: though I hope it may help to acquit me of inconsiderateness in undertaking, and of carelessness in executing it.

I expressed very early, and I believe more than once, what I now desire very earnestly to repeat, my fear that in printing many of John Keble's letters to myself I might lie open to the imputation of bringing my own name too forward. I find now that in the beginning I had hardly realised the extent to which this would go; and yet, as I advanced, I knew not how to avoid it. I could not think it right to alter his expressions, perfectly sincere as I knew them to be, though certainly exaggerated. The truth is, he was so humble, and at the same time so loving to his friends, that it seemed as if in his mind all the weakness and imperfection were in himself, all the strength and goodness in them. His letters must be read with this thought in the mind of the reader.

It may be said that I might not only to some extent have escaped this difficulty, but added much to the interest of my Memoir, if I had made more use of his letters to other friends and less of those to myself. There is much truth in this remark, and I have done what I could to comply with it. But it is not every possessor of his letters to whom I could properly apply. Many of them were written to persons on their own troubles and difficulties, and such, though very interesting, the holders would be little likely to give me for publication, and certainly I could not ask them.

To some extent I trust this may be taken for an answer, without more specification; but I must say a particular word as to one, perhaps his dearest and most honoured friend, who will be in every one's mind—Dr. Pusey. I suppose he possesses large numbers of important and interesting letters. He has always been so kind to me, that I should be ungrateful if I doubted his readiness to help me—indeed to volunteer his help, wherever he felt he could do so properly. Yet it is obvious that from the very intimacy which subsisted between them, combined with the extreme delicacy of the subjects to which their correspondence must have principally related, his letters might be just such as he would think it improper as yet to make public. I have therefore never applied to him; and for reasons not exactly the same, but of the same kind, I have pursued the same course with Dr. Newman.

The work no doubt suffers in consequence.

Keble's Letters to Hurrell Froude would have been specially interesting; writing to this pupil first and friend after, whom yet he always loved as a *younger* brother, he would have been presented in a new light. Mr. W. Froude, Hurrell's representative, was ready to communicate the letters if they could be found, but the search for them has been unsuccessful.

The help which I have received has come from so many persons, that I am compelled to ask the far larger number to accept a general, but most hearty expression of my gratitude. What has been done for me by some has been acknowledged, or will appear, in the work itself; such for example as Mr. Wilson. Beside much specific information, he placed in my hands a great many letters of which I have made free use.

But it would be wrong if I did not specify by name three ladies, who may yet I fear think it an ill-return for their kindness—Miss Baker, Miss Maria Trench, and Mrs. Cooke Trench—to whom I must add the Author of the "Daily Readings." I was very desirous of giving an authentic account of Keble in his office of Pastor of Hursley; and if I have succeeded in doing so, it is to be attributed *entirely* to the communications they were good enough to make to me. I cannot thank them too warmly.

In such a work as Keble's Life it was impossible, at least I have found it so, not to touch on many matters once the subject of hot controversy. When I began, I hoped I had laid down for myself a rule by which I might escape the responsibilities of a Church Historian. Perhaps I ought to have foreseen how impossible it would become in the progress of the work strictly to observe that rule. I am

sensible that sometimes I have not; and in consequence I may possibly have given pain or offence to excellent persons who now survive. I beg such to believe that I regret this very much. I do not know that I have anywhere questioned the motives of those from whose judgments I have been compelled to differ; and if I impute error to others, I am not so unwise as to suppose that I may not have fallen into it myself.

J. T. C.

HEATH'S COURT,
*Dec.* 24, 1868.

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I OUGHT not to part from this work without one word upon another and far greater, now in progress at Oxford, designed in part for the same purpose; I speak of Keble College. It is indeed a great conception and an almost unprecedented memorial; but it is more than a mere memorial, (if it were not, Keble would have shrunk from it,) it is an institution dedicated to the academical education of numbers, who without it may be unable to obtain that inestimable advantage. What is now being attempted at Oxford in another way testifies to the need, and I wish it every success; but I still venture to think

that the Collegiate system is essential to the completeness of an Oxford training.

Our undertaking, however, requires very much larger help than it has hitherto received, and I cannot but earnestly press this consideration on all who feel grateful to Keble, and would be glad to honour his memory; and also on all who desire to extend Oxford education not in a sectarian or illiberal, but truly Christian spirit, to a large class much desiring, much needing, and, without this help, quite unable to compass it.

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# MEMOIR

OF THE

# REV. JOHN KEBLE.

## CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.—BIRTH.—BOYHOOD.

IT is not without sincere misgivings that I commence this memoir. My sense of the difficulty of writing it properly, as well as of the importance that it should be written, if at all, fully, delicately, faithfully, lovingly, has become more strong the more I have had occasion to consider it with reference to myself. I will not affect to deny, that if the duty had been cast on me some years earlier, there were personal circumstances which, at least in part, might have seemed to recommend me for the performance of it—the most affectionate intimacy, and the closest communion of feelings and opinions, the possession of an unbroken correspondence from the year 1811, and the kind confidence with which the representatives of deceased friends were ready to confide to me a large number of his letters; these were among those circumstances. But

I feel now that my great age, and impaired strength of mind, as well as body, are more than equivalent disadvantages; indeed, a serious illness since I began to prepare for my work has added much weight to this consideration. Nor can I forget that the very advantages I speak of have a tendency to mislead me in the composition, and to disturb the proportions of my work, to make me dwell too much at length on parts exceedingly interesting to myself, but which may seem of less importance to those, a great proportion probably of my readers, who may be specially desirous to know of the part which John Keble took in the different measures and movements of our times in Church matters, and who will find themselves disappointed. For when I consented to the request made to me, I felt that I was not in any way competent to write the history of our Church for the last forty years, which yet seemed a necessary part of any complete account of his work on earth. In these very important matters my narrative will be deficient, and many of my readers will be disappointed.

Under all these circumstances, I cannot complain if I am asked why I have undertaken to write at all. In answer, I will not dwell on reasons of minor and in themselves perhaps insufficient importance. The truth is, that I was requested by one to whom at the time it was almost impossible for me to refuse any such thing; and the performance of my

promise, in so far as I am able, appears to me now in the light of a sacred duty.

My readers, however, will gather from what I have said, that my work will not assume to be a complete biography; indeed, independently of the reasons which apply to myself personally, it seems to me that the time has hardly yet arrived when this could be done, at once so freely and so dispassionately as it ought to be, if done at all. Some one will be found, I have a good hope, in due time to accomplish this more important task; to whom what I am about to do may be of some service. The George Herbert of our days ought not in the end to be left without his own Isaac Walton.

I must still farther, however, and perhaps in justice to myself, warn my readers that they are about to enter on a most uneventful story; few persons have lived so long, and achieved so great a name, about whom there is so little of change or incident to record. His life was passed in his father's house, in his college rooms, in his curacies, or in his vicarage, in occasional Long-Vacation rambles, in visits to the sea-side for the alleviation of sickness. He earnestly avoided publicity; happily for himself perhaps, neither the Crown nor the Church thought him a fit subject for promotion, which I need not say he never solicited, and I believe would have declined. Those who desire to read an exciting story will do well to close this book at once; but there are still

some, I believe, who either out of personal regard or grateful veneration may desire to know intimately his character, the manner of his passage through life, and the performance of his duties; how he lived, and how he died. As well as I can, I will try truly and simply to gratify the wishes of such readers. My object will be to present a full and faithful picture of his character; faithful, I hope, though drawn unquestionably in a reverent spirit, and with a loving hand.

---

I will not detain my readers by any further preface, nor will I consume time by any account of John Keble's family pedigree; it was a matter in which he took little interest. He never, that I remember, mentioned to me the name of any one of his ancestors, except that of Joseph Keble, of whose strange taste (as it seemed to him) he spoke slightingly, in employing himself as a Law-reporter; he did not know at the time the importance of the office, nor how much ability, industry, and learning, a successful discharge of it implied. Joseph Keble was a Reporter of the decisions of what is now styled the Court of Queen's Bench from 1660 to 1678; he did not, however, possess the qualifications of a good one, and his volumes are of little authority. I never heard Keble speak of Joseph's father, Richard, a lawyer of greater eminence. Mr. Foss, in his careful and

useful book, "The History of the Judges," records of him, that the Parliament made him a Welch Judge in 1647, a Serjeant in 1648, and one of the Commissioners of the Great Seal after the King's execution, together with Whitelocke and L'Isle. I do not know the precise reasons, but it is perhaps presumably not to his dishonour, that he found favour neither with Cromwell nor Charles II. The former displaced him in 1654, and the latter, upon his Restoration, excepted him from the Act of Indemnity; perhaps he was one of the Regicide Judges. Probably Keble knew nothing of these circumstances, and if he had known them, his passionate loyalty for the memory of Charles I. would have prevented his dwelling on them with much pleasure or interest.

John Keble was born on St. Mark's Day, 1792, at Fairford in Gloucestershire. I saw it stated by a correspondent of the "Guardian," that he had represented himself on one occasion to have been born in Hampshire, and I dare say he may have expressed himself so as to be misunderstood in that sense. Among the many letters, with the use of which I have been favoured, I have found one to George Cornish in which, dating from Hursley, he speaks of a visit he had just paid with his maternal uncle to Ringwood, "to see his *mother's* native place." The passage is characteristic, and I will extract it; the silence in it as to his own

place of birth would be almost conclusive if there were any real doubt about it :—

"As I hinted before, these are terrible times, and I have just been laying out oceans of money on a new brown jacket for my boy James, not to mention a journey which I took last Monday and Tuesday thro' Lyndhurst and Lymington to Ringwood, in order to see my Mother's native place ; to be sure it was at my Uncle's expense, but no matter for that. I am very glad I went ; altho' I could not have believed all memorials could have vanished in so short a time. Of the Parsonage where she lived, not one stone stands upon another, and there is but one person in the place who recollects her ; however, Uncle shewed me where she used to sit in Church, and that was well worth going for. Ringwood is a much nicer place than I had expected ; the meadows looked so beautifully green now all other grass is brown, and the alders, cattle, boats, and islets, were strewn about in various distances under a hot sun and thunder-cloud, making altogether a very pretty Flemish landscape. And Lyndhurst is the nicest place, in the middle of the Forest. I think Archery meetings there would be very nice things, but not half so nice as a meeting of you and me—which, that it may happen soon, and last long, is the sincere wish of your ever affectionate J. K., Junr."

The interest he thus took in Ringwood, and his own settlement in Hursley, might well make him call himself a Hampshire man, a phrase easily misunderstood, but there is no doubt that he was a Gloucestershire man by birth. He was the second

child and eldest son of the Rev. John Keble and Sarah Maule, the daughter of the Incumbent of Ringwood; three sisters and one brother, now the only survivor, completed the family circle. A few words must be said of his father. He was, I should suppose, a good scholar, and a man of considerable ability, besides that he was a clergyman of exemplary piety. He alone educated the two brothers up to their going to Oxford, and he had fitted both to be not merely successful competitors for Scholarships at Corpus Christi College at unusually early ages, but to enter on the studies of the University with credit and advantage. John Keble always spoke and wrote of him with singular love and veneration. I think I scarcely ever received a letter dated from Fairford during his lifetime, in which his health or employments were not mentioned, or some remark of his quoted; and in several rather important incidents in the son's life a word, even a look, from the father sufficed to determine his decision. It seemed indeed at all times to be John Keble's main object to consult his pleasure, and in the decline of his life to give him help and comfort. He was the Vicar of Coln St. Aldwin's, about three miles from Fairford; he resided at Fairford in a house which was his own property. He lived to his ninetieth year, taking occasionally a part of the Sunday duty to within a very few months of his death.

I have not been able to recover any noticeable

anecdotes of John Keble's boyhood. I certainly heard when we were Undergraduates together, that his father had never compelled him to study, and that he was taught only when he liked to learn. I have not been able on enquiry now to verify this story, yet it was so much the common understanding with us in College, that I do not doubt it was substantially true; and however unwise as a general rule, it may not have answered ill with such a boy. Certain it is that his proficiency both in Latin and Greek, and in Latin composition, at fifteen, would have done credit to distinguished boys of the same age at the best public school. One little circumstance I think worth recording before I pass from his boyhood, because it seems to furnish proof that even at that period he displayed to an attentive observer the same character for which he was so remarkable through life. One of his Godfathers was Mr. Stafford Smith, the Rector of Fladbury. Between the two families there seems to have been a good deal of intimacy, and he saw a good deal of his godson; he always designated him by the title of John the Good.

## CHAPTER II.

### UNDERGRADUATESHIP.—CORPUS CHRISTI, 1806—1811.

MR. KEBLE had himself been a Scholar and Fellow of Corpus Christi, and it was natural that he should desire to place his sons at the same college; I dare say, too, that the value of the scholarship, it's certainly leading to a fellowship, and the good preferment which the College offered, were not without their weight in determining his choice. Moreover, he seems to have maintained personal relations with the governing members of the house. Accordingly, he had trained John for the competition, and a vacancy occurring, he went with him to Oxford in December, 1806. I do not know what opponents John Keble had to encounter, except that he had one distinguished Etonian, but he was successful; and on the twelfth of that month was elected Scholar, wanting then more than four months of completing his fifteenth year.

It is a coincidence perhaps worth notice, that Edward Copleston, afterwards Provost of Oriel, and Bishop of Llandaff, was elected at about the same age a Scholar of the same College, having been educated also by his father, a country clergyman, and never sent to any school; like Keble also in this, that he entered Oxford at this early age, a youth

well advanced in scholarship, and in the practice of easy and accurate composition; like him, too, in due time he was a distinguished Prize Man, and one of the few who stand out among the Poetry Professors of the University in remarkable and enduring distinction.

In a chapter which I was allowed to contribute to the deservedly popular "Life of Dr. Arnold" by the Dean of Westminster, I observed that Arnold's character was affected not so much by the authorities of the College, as by its constitution and system, and by the residents whom it was his fortune to associate with there; and that I should hardly do justice to my subject, unless I stated a few particulars, and what I was at liberty to mention as to the latter. This applies with equal truth to Keble, and I venture, therefore, to transfer to this place what I then wrote, and the rather because the Corpus of their day is now a thing of the past, not remembered by many, and not unworthy of commemoration :—

"Corpus is a very small establishment: twenty Fellows and twenty Scholars, with four Exhibitioners, form the foundation. No independent members were admitted except Gentlemen Commoners, and they were limited to six. Of the Scholars several were Bachelors, and the whole number of Students actually under College tuition seldom exceeded twenty. But the Scholarships, though not entirely open, were yet enough so to admit of much competition: their value, and still more the commendable strictness and impartiality with which the examinations were conducted,

(qualities at that time more rare in college elections than now,) insured a number of good candidates for each vacancy, and we boasted a more than proportionate share of successful competitors for University honours. It had been generally understood (I know not whether the statutes prescribe the practice) that in the examinations a large allowance was made for youth; certain it was that we had many very young candidates, and that of these many, remarkable for early proficiency, succeeded. We were then a small society, the members rather under the usual age, and with more than the ordinary proportion of ability and scholarship; our mode of tuition was in harmony with these circumstances: not by private lectures, but in classes of such a size as excited emulation, and made us careful in the exact and neat rendering of the original; yet not so numerous as to prevent individual attention on the Tutor's part, and familiar knowledge of each pupil's turn and talents. In addition to the books read in lecture, the Tutor at the beginning of the Term settled with each Student upon some book to be read by himself in private, and prepared for the public examination at the end of Term in Hall; and with this book something on paper, either an analysis of it, or remarks upon it, was expected to be produced, which ensured that the book should really have been read. It has often struck me since that the whole plan, which is now, I believe, in common use in the University, was well devised for the tuition of young men of our age. We were not entirely set free from the leading-strings of the School: accuracy was cared for: we were accustomed to *vivâ voce* rendering, and *vivâ voce* questions and answers in our lecture-room, before an audience of fellow-students, whom we sufficiently respected; at the same time, the additional reading trusted to ourselves alone,

prepared us for accurate private study, and for our final exhibition in the Schools.

"One result of all these circumstances was, that we lived on the most familiar terms with each other: we might be, indeed we were, somewhat boyish in manner, and in the liberties which we took with each other; but our interest in literature, ancient and modern, and in all the stirring matters of that stirring time was not boyish—we debated the classic and romantic question, we discussed poetry and history, logic and philosophy; or we fought over the Peninsular battles and the continental campaigns with the energy of persons interested in them. Our habits were inexpensive and temperate; one break-up party was held in the Junior Common-room at the end of each Term, in which we indulged our genius more freely; and our merriment, to say the truth, was somewhat exuberant and noisy; but the authorities wisely forebore too strict an enquiry into this.

"It was one of the happy peculiarities of Corpus that the Bachelor Scholars were compelled to residence. This regulation, seemingly inconvenient, but most wholesome as I cannot but think for themselves, and now unwisely relaxed, operated very beneficially on the Undergraduates; with the best and the most advanced of these, they associated very usefully. I speak here with grateful and affectionate remembrance of the privileges which I enjoyed in this way."

In this way, I may now add, that Keble formed one of the closest and most valuable friendships of his life.

Such was the body into which John Keble was introduced in December, 1806, a mere lad, remarkably home-bred and home-keeping, who had seen

as little of "men and cities," I suppose, as a lad of his age could well have seen; yet ready at once to take a forward place in the studies, and become a well-accepted member in the society of the college. He was in truth still but a boy, with less of confidence, and knowledge of the world, than would be found commonly in boys of the upper part of the fifth form in any of our Public Schools. Many of his letters to his sisters and brother, written soon after the commencement of his academic life, were preserved, and have been entrusted to me; they are the simple outpourings of an affectionate, home-loving, and clever boy, with a great deal moreover of that joyous fun and humour, which he never lost entirely even in the most anxious years of his life. I will make but one extract from the very first; it is curious that he should have commenced by a trouble in being too late for chapel on his first Sunday morning. His father, it seems, was an old friend of Dr. Eveleigh, then the Provost of Oriel; he had gone up, as I have said, with his son to the election, and the two were entertained at the Oriel Lodge. Writing to his eldest sister, Elizabeth, he says:—

"I have scarcely begun studying yet this Term—however, there is a lecture appointed for Friday in Mr. Darnell's room—it will be however in a play of Euripides, which I have before read. I tell you this for the edification of Jones and Thomas—I hope they are both good children, and behave well whilst I am gone.

"I had almost got into a scrape on Sunday morning, when we were all to be in Chapel. I slept at the Provost's that night, and got up in the morning with the intention of going to chapel—I had even gone to my room to wait for the time of going—yet after all I was too late. This was owing to my having mistaken the bell at Oriel, which goes rather later than Corpus, for the latter. I was quite frightened at first, when I found I was not in time: however, by my father's mediation, I was excused by the President for my absence."

*Oxford, C.C.C., Jan.* 20, 1807.

In November, 1807, I find him writing in Latin to his brother, who was then preparing to follow his steps, and contend for a coming vacancy; he writes with apparent ease, and, so far as I can judge, correctly and elegantly; and he had then nearly finished Æschylus in the Lecture-room. He was very fortunate in his Tutor, Mr. Darnell, the late Rector of Stanhope—a man of excellent taste and accurate scholarship, one of those ornaments of Oxford, whom Bishop Barrington in the wise exercise of his great patronage, and profiting by the knowledge of the University, which he had the means of acquiring from his residence at Mongewell, delighted to transplant into places of honour and profit in his own diocese of Durham. Darnell evidently understood and appreciated Keble, and cultivated his taste with care; he lived to be proud of his pupil, and on some occasions in after-life, when it was sought to do him

honour, testified to the high opinion which he entertained of him.

In the spring of 1808, John Keble was probably preparing to compete for the English Verse prize; the subject was "Mahomet," and he was not successful, the prize being awarded to Mr. Rolleston, who had also been successful in the preceding year. The rule had not then been made, which this circumstance caused to be laid down, that no once successful candidate should compete for the same prize a second time; Keble understood that had it then existed, the prize would have been awarded to him. Of this poem I find an extract in my "Silva," but I will not insert it here, for it would give a wrong impression of his general compositions of the same date; it was evidently written after the style of English prize poems of that day, brilliant and flowing, but with no great originality of thought.

He wrote for other prizes during his undergraduateship, but was never successful; it is evident from his letters to his father, who was in his entire confidence in these, as in all other matters, and to whom he seems to have submitted all he wrote for his criticism, that he was too much distracted by the labour necessary for preparing to try for the First Class both in Classics and Mathematics; but in nothing was the difference of age so likely to stand in his way as in these competitions. I had the good fortune once to be successful against him, but I was

two years his senior, and had had the advantage of six years' training at Eton.

I was myself elected a Scholar in April, 1809. I found Keble in his third year highly distinguished in the senior classes of the college, both in Classics and Mathematics. Darnell was no longer Tutor, nor in residence, he had been succeeded by George Leigh Cooke. It is no disparagement of this excellent man to say that he was not equal to his eminent predecessor in scholarship or taste; but he was inferior to no man in industry, or zeal, good common sense, patience, and excellent temper, to all which he joined a genuine sense of humour, and delightful simplicity of manner. As my whole undergraduateship was passed under his tuition, and as I owed much of whatever success I had to his care, I should be ungrateful if I missed this opportunity of expressing the gratitude which I feel towards him. He has long passed out of this life, and, owing to my election to a Fellowship at another college, and my early departure from residence, our intercourse was only occasional; but my friendly relations with my old Tutor only ceased with his life. For what remained of Keble's preparation for the Schools, he and I were in the same class, and he found in Cooke a most useful Tutor, sparing no pains in completing the work which Darnell had more than laid the foundation of.

I was soon upon terms of familiarity with Keble,

which rapidly ripened into friendship. We became correspondents in 1811. We lived on the same staircase, he in a garret over my rooms. I see now his seat by the fireside, and a cupboard conveniently near; into which it was said that in the early times, when he had hardly courage to resolve on trying for the First Class in both Schools, he would convey his *Principia* rather rudely and hastily, if an intruder broke in upon his study of them; which he pursued at that time, to use a slang term, "on the sly." Although I was so much inferior to him in many respects, and so much his junior in standing, yet I was his senior in age, and I came from intimate and improving intercourse at Eton with some of the ablest and most studious boys in the school, and I was able at least to appreciate his mind and acquirements. We saw a great deal of each other. This was a period when the Lake Poets, as they were called, and especially Wordsworth and my Uncle, had scarcely any place in the literature of the country, except as a mark for the satire of some real wits, and some mis-named critics of considerable repute. I possessed, the gift of my Uncle, the "Lyrical Ballads," and "Wordsworth's Poems," (these last in the first edition). It is among the pleasant recollections of my life, that I first made the great poet known to Keble. As might have been expected, he read him with avidity; the admiration for his poetry, which he conceived in youth, never waned in after life; indeed, when he

came to know the man it was augmented, I may rather say completed, by the respect and regard which his character inspired. It was hardly possible for Keble to be a very enthusiastic admirer of any poetry, unless he had at least conceived a good opinion of the writer. I may say, in passing, that Wordsworth's admiration of the author of "The Christian Year," and the volume itself, was in after life very warm; there were few of the many tributes which he received, which he set a greater value on, than the mention made of him by Keble in the Theatre at Oxford, when he received his honorary degree; and the dedication to him of the *Prælectiones.*

In 1810 and 1811 respectively, George J. Cornish and Thomas Arnold were elected Scholars, the former from Westminster, the latter from Winchester. I think neither of them could have been in the lecture-room with Keble, but they became fully accepted members of our society, and on intimate terms with him. Of the latter I surely need say nothing generally—nor will I repeat what I have said elsewhere of the unhappy interruption of his intimate intercourse with Keble; to both it was a bitter trial, and I am sure that in neither did it extinguish the tenderest love for the other. Both Cornish and Arnold were great accessions to our society. I must yet add to this list the mention of six others, Noel Thomas Ellison, afterwards Fellow and Tutor of Balliol, John Tucker, T. Trevenen Penrose, John Bartholomew, William Henry Turner, and Charles Dyson; the first

of these was elected to a Durham Scholarship at the same time at which I was elected, and the last two I found in residence as Bachelors when I joined the College; of Cornish and Dyson it will be part of my plan to say a few words more in detail. Tucker and Turner, I am happy to say, survive. Of Ellison I must say in passing, that joined to considerable talents, he had an originality and earnest simplicity of manner as well as warmth of heart, which made him a most delightful companion and loved friend. Balliol men will never forget that he was one of those who, succeeding as Tutor to the late Master, carried on the system which has raised that College to its present eminence, with a zeal, and genial heartiness, that could not but contribute largely to its success. There is a sonnet among Keble's miscellaneous poems, written on a visit to him at Huntspill, which at once testifies to Keble's love of him, and paints with a single felicitous touch the winning character of the man.

Thus I have named a few of those who formed our small circle, and looking back through the medium of affection and regret, seeing everything distance-mellowed and softened, perhaps glorified, I may exaggerate our activity in the studies of the place, the simplicity and ease of our social intercourse, the delights of our walks, and the intellectual interest of our earnest talks together. I may exaggerate, but I do not invent; and one proof

I think is this, that although many of us were soon scattered to fellowships in other Colleges, and took different courses in life, became immersed in other cares, and pursued different professions, in one thing we all agreed — our hearty love and preference for Corpus Christi, and the looking back with unmixed and undiminishing delight on the days we passed together within her walls. Keble gave utterance to his feelings, when he quitted it, in the following lines, which can have no more appropriate place than here :—

"How soft, how silent, has the stream of Time
Borne me unheeding on, since first I dream'd
Of Poetry and Glory in thy shade,
Scene of my earliest harpings. There, if oft,
(As through thy courts I took my nightly round,
Where thy embattled line of shadows hid
The moon's white glimmerings) on my charmed ear,
Have swelled of thy triumphant minstrelsy
Some few faint notes : if one exulting chord
Of my touched heart has thrill'd in unison,
Shall I not cling unto thee? Shall I cast
No strained glance on my adopted home
Departing? Seat of calm delight, farewell!
Home of my muse, and of my friends! I ne'er
Shall see thee, but with such a gush of soul
As flows from him, who welcomes some dear face
Lost in his childhood—yet not lost to me
Art thou ; for still my heart exults to own thee,
And memory still, and friendship make thee mine."

*June* 27, 1811.

The insertion of these verses reminds me that I had brought from Eton the practice of the set to which I belonged, of keeping each a "Silva" (as we ventured to call it), into which we transcribed, among other and better but not more valued things, our own efforts in prose and verse. Keble and Arnold adopted it, and to this may be owing the preservation of a great many of their youthful poems. It may well be believed, that I turn over those yellow pages now and then with intense interest; and although, no doubt, I regard the compositions with too much partiality for a critic, yet I think I may safely say that they bear unanswerable testimony to the taste and scholarship, as well as the original ability, of some at least of the students of that day.

## CHAPTER III.

### JOHN MILLER.—GEORGE JAMES CORNISH.—CHARLES DYSON.

IN placing these three names at the head of this chapter, and devoting it to a short account of them, I am not unmindful of Cowper's clever warning against framing records of "names of little note;" nor does it escape me that I may seem to depart from my proper subject. But Keble's character through life was but a strict development of his character in youth; and his early friendships were among the more powerful agents in its formation. His disposition was social, his affections very warm, breaking through the restraint of his natural shyness; and although his purity of spirit secured him from loving any one wholly unworthy of his love, yet his humility was so great that he was apt not merely to undervalue himself, but to overvalue whatever there was of good or great in those whom he loved. It may easily be understood, therefore, how open he was to influences from his friendships, and how enduring his friendships were.

I think it well on these grounds to select the three of all whom I am at liberty to mention, whom he seemed to me to love most dearly among his asso-

ciates while an Undergraduate, and who in different ways and degrees most influenced his habitual way of thinking and feeling in after life. They are the three whose names I have prefixed to this chapter.

John Miller was not a Corpus man, but of Worcester College, and in what way Keble first became acquainted with him, I cannot now state. He had passed his examination, and been placed in the First Class in Classics a year before I came to Oxford, and I think I met him for the first time in the year 1810 in the Theatre. He had gained the Bachelor's Prize then newly instituted by Lord Grenville for Latin Prose, and I had been fortunate enough to win the Undergraduate's for Latin Verse. Thenceforward through life he treated me with the greatest kindness, and I could not but love and honour him more and more the longer I knew him. But with Keble his relations were more close, and from an earlier period; as young men they had so much in common, in their habits, and characters, and in their simplicity of manner and original humour, that when thrown together they could not well escape an intimate friendship; and as they walked on in the path of that profession to which they were both devoted, there was on almost all points such agreement as to its obligations, and the manner of discharging them, as well as to the various questions which from time to time agitated Churchmen, that the early friendship could not but endure and ripen into

the closest intimacy. Keble, indeed, was sure to regard Miller with reverence, and he always spoke and wrote of him with that feeling on his mind; but this did not prevent them from genial merriment and familiarity when they met. Those were, indeed, white days to Keble; here and there through his correspondence the visits of Miller to Fairford, or their meetings elsewhere, are mentioned with real delight. It is thus that he speaks of him in a letter to Cornish, dated from Fairford, Sept. 22, 1818:—

"We have got good Miller regularly settled, I do not mean married, only fifteen miles from us, in one of the prettiest little ravines in the chalk escarpment beyond Highworth, nearly in a line from us; and the church, close to which stands his parsonage, is a pattern of neatness; it has, moreover, one of the prettiest Saxon doorways I ever saw. Tom and I pilgrimed it over there the other day, and found *Hooker* and his father and sister at home, but thank God no Joan to mar the quietness of the family party, which was just what you would expect. You must come and see us and him. I assure you he enquired after you very particularly. What a book his is, (he alludes to the Bampton Lectures); the more I go on pondering it, the more light it seems to throw on every subject, and hardly any thing else that I take up that does not put me in mind of it. If I must *jure* into any man's *verbs*, I think on the whole it would be his."

Miller, like Keble, retired early from Oxford into

the country, and, except when he returned at intervals at the request of his College to assist for a time in the tuition, he passed his days residing with his father, or his brother and sister, devoted to the duties of his profession, and always in rural parishes. He fell asleep in 1858, after a short illness, in his seventy-first year, and was laid by the side of his brother, in his own quiet churchyard, lamented not least by those among whom he had ministered for so many years; who, (as has been well said in a short memoir to which I am much indebted,) however incompetent to form a judgment of him in other respects, were fully able to estimate his worth as a "Christian minister, a neighbour, and a man." The "other respects" here mentioned refer to his published works; there were several of these, the most important the Bampton Lectures for 1817, and a volume of Sermons published in 1830. The ordinary fate of published sermons is almost proverbial, and I fear these have not escaped it; but they are of remarkable merit, and I am sure will richly repay the study of any reader. Both have received testimonials as unsuspicious as they are valuable. In the "Life and Correspondence of Bishop Jebb" is a letter from him, in which he first shortly expresses in the strongest terms the general impression which the Lectures had made on him, and then goes through a long and minute examination of them, expressing differences of opinion as to several particulars, but de-

tracting nothing from his general admiration. Of the Sermons, Robert Southey writes :—

"These are, in the true sense of a word which has been most lamentably misapplied, Evangelical. I do not know any discourses in which revealed truths and divine philosophy are brought home with such practical effect to all men. They have the rare merit of being at the same time thoroughly intelligible, thoroughly religious, thoroughly discreet[a]."

In another letter he says of them :—

"They are unlike any others which I have ever read. They are thoroughly Christian in their spirit, and philosophical, comprehensible by the plainest understanding, and as satisfactory to the judgment as they are to the feelings[b]."

These are testimonies to which of course I add nothing of my own; but I will mention two other small but very interesting publications by him, "A Christian Guide for Plain People," published in 1820, and "Things after Death," of which the second edition was published in 1854. Of the former of these two, Keble says this in a letter to me of April, 1820 :—

"Have you read a little publication of Miller's which I sent to James Coleridge, and if you have, how do you like it? Miller has been quite unwell since he wrote it, and we

[a] Southey's "Life and Correspondence," vol. vi. p. 90. [b] Ibid.

began to be rather alarmed about him; chiefly, I believe, on the notion that he was too good to live; but I am thankful to say that he is now much better. Perhaps you do not know that he is in part returned to College, as he comes up for the last three weeks of every Term to Collectionize. And from this, and his being situated within fifteen miles of us in the country, I hope to see more and more of him; and if I am not very much the better for doing so, I know whose fault it must be. Lest you should think his style in this new book too obscure for the 'Plain People,' I must tell you that he made Moliere's experiment; for he gave the Sermons to his servant, quite a rustic lad, to read before he printed them, and the man said he understood them all except the fifth, which accordingly M. made plainer, till the youth professed himself satisfied with it. And his father, the Clerk of the Parish, had given the greatest proof of his understanding even of this the obscurest part, for he said to Miller, 'O yes, Sir, I see what you mean, you mean such and such people (naming them) by the one of your two classes, and such and such by the other.' Now, as it happened, the Sermons were written while M. was in Herefordshire, before ever he had set his eyes on the said people. I call this a very satisfactory experiment, quite as much so as most of Sir Humphrey Davy's; and it seems to establish, what I have long wished to believe, and am now almost convinced of, viz. that poor people, generally speaking, have much greater understanding of what we say to them, than most of us are apt to fancy; in short, that ignorance as well as infidelity comes more from the heart than from the head."

I think I shall be forgiven for adding what he

wrote on the same subject, about the same time, to Dyson, who was then an incumbent in Yorkshire :—

"I wish I could send you a little book which Miller has just published, called a Christian Guide for Plain (not ugly) People. It seems to me to be just what we want; but Parker apparently does not think well of its sale, as he has only printed 500 copies of it. The worst of it is, that people are determined beforehand to fancy every thing Miller writes so very hard to understand. Do you not think there is a great deal of laziness in that kind of objection, urged as we continually hear it against both Divinity and Poetry? Miller, however, has done more than most men to secure this book's being intelligible to those for whom it is written, for he made his servant read it, like Moliere rehearsing his plays to the old woman, and altered some places which he did not understand, but found him perfectly up to the general drift of it. I wonder whether people that write tracts for the poor generally take this method; it seems mere common sense for them to do so, and yet one can hardly think they do. One thing is, the poor certainly understand the meaning of a sentence very often when they could not for their lives explain the single words of which it is made up; and if I find it so in Gloucestershire, which is a mere Bœotia, much more, I ween, do you in Yorkshire, which is so famed for the shrewdness of its rustics."

This was the man between whom and Keble the closest communion of feelings and principles existed. They were strikingly alike in the warmth of their

home affections, in their early and absolute renunciation of the honours of the world, in their devotion to their profession from the very beginning, and always in the most quiet and humble line in which its duties could be presented to them; alike, too, in this, that retired as were their lives, their interest was sensibly alive as to all the questions which from time to time arose and affected the Church; upon these they never failed to take counsel together, and they spared no pains to advance what they deemed her true interests.

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I had known Cornish, who was born at Ottery St. Mary, June 7, 1794, from his childhood well; we separated as boys, he for Westminster, and I for Eton, and we met again upon his election as Scholar in 1810. He had grown to be a young man of very gentlemanly appearance, with somewhat of reserve, and what might almost be taken for haughtiness in his manner; this was in reality the result of great refinement of feeling and of shyness. No one, indeed, had less of haughtiness in his nature; he was very modest, of keen sensibilities, and accurate taste; and these rather than great vigour, or power of sustained application, were the characteristics of his intellect. He was pure-hearted as a child, and very affectionate; his seeming coldness soon yielded to the kindness of his reception amongst us; and his

geniality with a kind of Cervantic humour, which he often displayed very amusingly, made him soon a great favourite. He was just the person to attract Keble's love; and I see in their correspondence to the end of his life the tenderness in Keble and somewhat of the manner of an elder brother towards him. This tenderness, in kind as well as in degree, extended itself to the other members of his family, and to his widow and children after his death. He was placed in the First Class for Classics at the Michaelmas Examination for 1813, and in due course became Fellow, and afterwards Tutor of the College; but the University life was not to his taste. He, too, had devoted himself to pastoral duty, and having married early, he retired to the curacy of Salcombe, near to Salcombe Hill, his father's house; he dwelt after a time at Packcombe, a sweet secluded cottage in the hills at a little distance. But he was not a man to be overlooked, and at Michaelmas, 1828, he was collated by his old master, Bishop Carey, to the united Vicarages of Kenwyn and Kea, a large and important Cure in Cornwall. Here he acquired high estimation in the diocese, and was clearly marked out for advancement; but his health, never strong, and too severely tried by losses of his children, and by family afflictions, gave way, and he died in the prime of life, Sept. 10, 1849, dearly loved, highly honoured, and tenderly lamented.

It was thus that Keble wrote respecting his illness and death to Dyson :—

"So I missed seeing him once more, and the last time was at our consecration. It is such a comfort to me to think of him here, with old Tom, Coleridge, and others. About him it seems purely selfish to grieve. Yet one does grieve very much; one feels that this world can never be the same without him; the things which he would have said, or thought, on different occasions, come so naturally into one's mind. . . . .

"What a time it seems since we have met, and how much I seem to have to say! but I don't like saying it now, because it is not all about him."

Then at the close of his note, he adds :—

"*Private.* My dear Dyson, do ask for me that I may meet *him* again. . . . Ever your most loving J. K."

The reader of "The Christian Year" must have been thankful to Keble for appending to the stanzas on the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity the exquisite little poem to the Redbreast. It is by Cornish. He was one of the band of friends who were from time to time interchanging amongst each other their compositions. He continued to write, as occasions moved him, as long as he lived. Upon his death, at the request of his parishioners, a volume of his sermons was printed, and to this, by the desire of some of his friends, was appended a selection from these verses. I have often wished, and I still wish, that these last had been published in a separate small

volume. The sermons have much merit, and must have been a valued and appropriate present to his parishioners; but, as commonly happens with sermons, their circulation was not large, and was limited, I think, to a single edition. Unfortunately they buried the poems, which deserve another fate, unless I am deceived by my love for the author, and my familiarity with some of the scenes and persons alluded to in them. I own I can never read several of them without being much affected, and I do not think I am in error when I say that they are so tasteful and finished in composition, so imaginative, so true, and so full of genuine tenderness, that they would give pleasure to a larger circle if they were more generally known. I do not wholly despair that this may yet be done; and I could I believe add some which might well have a place among them. I will insert a specimen conceived in the same spirit as the lines on the Redbreast.

*Come to the Woods.*

When the hour of meeting's nigh,
And thy heart is beating high,
Come to the woods, the woods, lad.
And if the boughs are ringing,
With all their minstrels singing,
Do thou, too, rejoice,
And utter a voice
More glad.

Or if on Winter's tide
Floats Autumn's wither'd pride,
Come to the woods, the woods, lad.
Why should the bard be dumb?
'Tis meet that thou shouldst come
Their Spring gifts to repay,
And make the pale day
Less sad.

The Poems already published are so little known, I fear, that I will venture to add one from them:—

*Dreams.*

My dearest love, to whom I owe
That I am whatsoe'er I be;
Whose sun-lit eye, in hours of woe,
Has bid the darkest shadows flee;
Whose steady step the path pursued,
That from afar thy wisdom viewed;—

If brightest promise disappear,
Joy after joy perchance decay,
I still can dry the flowing tear,
All thankful for the joys that stay;
For Mercy and eternal Truth
Surely have followed me from youth.

Only, "my life's celestial sign,"
Thy presence must be with me still;
The rest I freely can resign,
Obedient to the Master's will.
Not thee! not thee! my anguished heart,
Not yet from thee has learnt to part.

And yet Life's fairest hours are fled,
The latter sands too plainly run;
And Time his early snow to shed
Upon our brows has now begun;
And swifter does the torrent flow,
Ere yet it seek the gulf below.

Hence, idle dreams! the day is ours,
And we will "work while it is day,"
And consecrating all our powers
To God, and, living as we pray,
In calmness wait His power to prove,
Whose knowledge but subserves His love.

*May*, 1845.

I might have hesitated to reprint these stanzas, but that since I commenced this little notice of the husband, the wife to whom they are addressed has been called to her rest. I am at liberty now to say, that there is not a syllable of exaggeration in this outpouring of love; it is but justice to the wife from the husband, who had tried and never found her wanting. His was a nature which required support, and, as I have said, he was severely tried; beyond his own immediate circle, he had painful sorrows; within it he lost child after child; and though he bowed in Christian submission to the blows, his sensitive nature could not sustain them without injury. In all these sorrows she was his earthly stay and comfort. He died; and what she had been to him, she continued to be to her children, until her

strength failed under the severity, and the continuance of the calls made on it, and she departed in peace. She was, indeed, what in one of his poems he calls her, a noble woman.

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I have felt it to be no departure from my main object to dwell for a little while on the memory of John Miller and George Cornish. In respect of Charles Dyson, I may say, with the strictest accuracy, that no memoir of Keble, however short, could be complete which omitted to give some idea of this dear friend. Perhaps no man of equal virtue, sweetness, cultivation, and ability, ever passed through life so little known beyond the circle of his own family and friends; and yet I think no man was ever more loved and revered within that circle, or exercised a more powerful influence over the minds of those with whom he was intimate. Keble was among these; the intimacy commenced, as I have said, at Corpus, and continued to the end of Dyson's life unbroken; and I speak with substantial accuracy when I say that there was scarcely a step which he took, especially in matters connected with his profession, or the Church, to which he did not make Dyson first privy, ask his co-operation, if the thing admitted of it, and always seek, if he did not always follow, his advice. The extracts from the correspondence, which I shall have occasion to

make, will shew this in numerous instances. It may suffice now to say, that it was Dyson very mainly who overcame his reluctance to publish "The Christian Year," and to whom, perhaps, above all his other friends, the world owes that great gift when it was first made.

Charles Dyson was the grandson of the Jeremiah Dyson of whom Johnson in his life of Akenside records, that the poet physician "would perhaps have been reduced to great exigencies, but that Mr. Dyson, with an ardour of friendship that has not many examples, allowed him three hundred pounds a-year;" munificence indeed, when the times and Mr. Dyson's own means are considered. Dyson once said to me, "My grandfather was satyrized by Horace Walpole, but he was a noble fellow; he would not sell the places at the table of the House of Commons, as his predecessors always did, but appointed Hatsell freely, losing £6,000 thereby, and Hatsell in consequence appointed my father freely." His son Jeremiah followed his steps in the House, and finally filled the same post there; and it was intended that his grandson, of whom I write, should pursue the same course; but this from the most generous motives he abandoned, and then resolutely and earnestly devoted himself to the Church.

When I entered the College, he had already taken his Bachelor's degree; he was, however, still a regular resident according to the College rule, and

was one of the kindly party who greeted me on my admission into the Junior Common-room. Keble and he were already on friendly terms, and I was happy enough to be soon admitted to the same privilege. Delicacy of constitution, and principle equally made him a very abstinent man, but he was by disposition social; his father's position, and the society with which he associated at his home, his more frequent visits to London, the extent and variety of his reading, and information, might have made him much regarded by us who were younger, and had seen less of the world; but he added to all these advantages such sweetness of temper, and so much quiet humour, as made his society eagerly coveted. Drinking tea in his room, two or three of us at a time, was a great delight. I smile when I remember how we thought of his tea from Twinings, and his wax lights; luxuries or refinements which in our day, or at least in our College, were not commonly indulged in. He was very fond of coming out late at night and pacing up and down our little quadrangle; many and many a happy talk have Keble and I had with him in this way; to which, I think, he alludes in the verses which I just now quoted.

He became a Fellow of the College; and was elected Anglo-Saxon Professor in 1812; one admirable lecture, and one only, he delivered. He ought, no doubt, to have done more, but in those

days the duties of such professorships were not regarded as they now are. He could not be called an indolent man, for he was always rather a laborious student; but he had a nice, even fastidious, taste in composition, and he was very conscientious in his preparation for any work, a severe judge of his own performances, and never thought himself fully prepared to be a public teacher. He ought to have been a great ecclesiastical historian. Keble repeatedly urged him to this, and he commenced his preparations, but so conscientiously and on so large a scale that the days of health and vigour passed away in making them; and when his pen should have been in his hand, and his work begun, his constitution gave signals of weakness, and his strength failed him.

He married his cousin, and retired to the living of Nun Burnholme, in Yorkshire, to which he had been collated by Archbishop Harcourt, a friend of his father's. The severity of the climate affected Mrs. Dyson's health, and this led him for a time to return to Oxford, as one of the Chaplains of his College. The libraries of the University and its society no doubt contributed to this choice. He exchanged Nun Burnholme finally for Nazing, in Essex, and this again he resigned in order to devote himself to the care and comfort of his father, who, in somewhat declining health, had become a second time a widower, and was then residing at Petworth.

There were family circumstances which seemed to cast this duty on him specially, into which it is unnecessary for me to enter; but Dyson had his scruples as to the resignation of his living, and consulted Keble upon it, whose answer was, "All I can say is, I have given up my Curacy in order to take charge of my father and sister." Dyson, however, was constantly at the service of the neighbouring clergy; and, indeed, for a part of the time, took a Curacy near. His father died in the autumn of 1835, about the time of Keble's marriage; and I insert here an extract from the letter to Dyson and Mrs. Dyson, in which he acknowledges their congratulations on his own marriage, and expresses his condolence on Mr. Dyson's death. This letter happens to contain a fuller expression of his judgment on the resignation of his living.

"*High-street, Southampton, Nov.* 5, 1835.

"My very dear Friends,

"It is inexcusably selfish to go on so long without acknowledging your great kindness in thinking of us at such a time so much and so kindly, and without assuring you that we have not been unmindful of you; though, indeed, it was a good while before we heard the news of your irreparable loss, for we had no letter that succeeded in overtaking us for ten days after our flight from Gloucestershire. It is a strange sort of feeling that one has in thus interchanging congratulations and condolences, and the perplexity of it, if it were not for that end to which we trust both will help

in guiding us, would be not a little painful; as it is, I hope we may say, without presumption, that even to our half blind eyes the good very much preponderates. It is sweet to think of the rich reward you have even already received, for coming when you did to stay where you did, and most refreshing to hear that your dear sister bears this second great trial so well,—a blessing which, under Providence, you may surely attribute to your taking the step you did. Seldom, indeed, I should think (if one may say so without presumption), is approbation of living man's conduct more clearly intimated. What you say of looking for a cure in Hampshire (for Elizabeth has sent it to us), quite makes one ache with the pleasant fancy (one dares not nurse it into a hope) of your coming near us."

Dyson now quitted Petworth; he was anxious to resume his professional duties in the care of a parish, and was seeking for a curacy, when the late Dowager Lady Mildmay, who had been a family friend, presented him to the rectory of Dogmersfield. Thither he repaired. At his own expense he built a parsonage, for he would not impose a burthen on a family living by borrowing the money for the purpose; and helped his sister, who thenceforth resided with him, in building a new parish church. Both were placed in situations more convenient than the old ones, for the larger and poorer part of his parishioners. At Dogmersfield he resided for the remainder of his life. My readers may smile at my stating the nicknames he bore among his intimate friends, but they were characteristic of the man, and

will re-appear, it may be often, in Keble's letters. At Corpus he took by inheritance from his grandfather and father the familiar abbreviation of Jeremiah, and acquired for himself the title of the Venerable Bede; at Dogmersfield he became the Simorg, and the Rectory was of course his Nest. And truly it was a nest, in which the doubtful and distressed never failed to find comfort and counsel, the cheeriest comfort, the wisest counsel. His society and conversation were delightful; in his talk such a happy mixture of things old and new, enriched with so much anecdote and literature, so grave and so charitable on serious subjects, and on all so seasoned with quiet humour in the manner. Retiring from notice and unknown to the world, discharging his duties in the quietest and most peaceful spirit, he was yet to all who knew him an object of loving veneration. Adventures in his life there were none to tell. He was a diligent pastor, an earnest student, a delightful host; his greatest pleasure beyond what these things implied was in seeing country at home and abroad. As soon as the Continent opened in 1814, I accompanied him part way in a tour into France, Switzerland, and Italy, with two brothers, Nathanael and Noel Ellison. In a large old family coach, with the same pair of horses we went through the heart of France with great deliberation to Lyons, and thence up the Rhone to Geneva,—happy days which I still delight to think on. Keble was to have been of the party, but was prevented.

Arnold says in a letter to me[e], "I saw Dyson the other day in Oxford when I went to take my degree of B.D., and he and his wife were enough to freshen one's spirit for some time to come," an observation strikingly characteristic of the effect of intercourse with him. When Keble had become Vicar of Hursley, Dyson and he were within easy distance of each other on the same line of railway; the one, however, had many engagements at home and abroad, and Mrs. Keble's health required his close attendance on her often, and sometimes for long periods; the delicacy of the other's constitution made movements from home not easy always to him; yet personally or by letter seldom or never did the one take any step of importance without seeking counsel at the hand of the other, and every now and then they had joyous and remembered meetings. Numerous was the band which gathered round Dyson's grave when it pleased God to call him home. I well remember that after the funeral and the dispersion of the general body of attendants on it, Keble and I passed the afternoon until it was necessary for him to return home, strolling together in the fields near the house and church, conversing, as we had not often an opportunity to do, on the past and the future.

The last time I saw Dyson was toward the end of

[e] "Life," vol. i. p. 73.

February, 1860. I found him altered in appearance, feebler in body, and manifestly declining. Yet the approaches to death were so soft and gentle, and he contemplated his end so peacefully and hopefully, that it was not a painful subject to talk about, and we talked much of it. Among other things I remember we conversed on the intermediate state and the condition of the blessed. I asked him, "When your mind has been running on these subjects, have you ever followed the thought on as to literature or intellect? Will Shakespeare be anything there beyond humbler men?" He said, "I remember years ago we discussed this in my rooms at Corpus. I believe I was for some superiority for cultivated intellect, but I think now it is the affections of the heart that will be the test of superiority. Many a humble person of whom we know nothing now, will be called up from the lowest place to sit down on high. Abdiel was but a seraph, yet he might be an archangel." "But," I said, "David's Psalms, merely as productions of the intellect, will they be as nothing in the scale?" "Oh," he answered, "we know that such as he—Prophets, Apostles, Saints—will have their special places." "We must still," I said, "cultivate our talents, of course." "Of course we must; but you know the affections, our circumstances, our opportunities are all talents, as much as the gifts of the intellect. No doubt there will be disparities; many are called, few chosen, there are many mansions."

As we stood by his mantelpiece shortly before I left him, he pointed out some old family drawings and little relics which friends had brought him from their travels. I remember a fragment of rock from Sinai, a stone from Jordan, a bit of the rocky ground of the pathway from Bethany to Jerusalem. He remarked how in looking on such things, and recalling the scenes of his boyhood and youth, he was moved, sometimes almost to tears.

I see him now standing at the door as I left him; with a smile on his face, and in his old playful way he said, "Well, Privy Councillor, good-bye; thank you for this. I cannot tell you how much pleasure you have given me by this visit."

So we parted, for this life.

I may, and I probably shall, be blamed for lingering so long in this digression, but at whatever cost I must yet add to it. I cannot but in some sort acknowledge, though I can never pay, to my friend the debt I owe him. He was, indeed, my friend, and when he was a friend, he was the best of friends. How he discharged that duty to me in the particulars, as from time to time the calls arose, of course can never be told to the public, but it will not be forgotten by some at least in this and another generation; and I am persuaded his acts, and the spirit in which he did them, are written for him in that memorial where alone he would wish them to appear. In the various trials and troubles which have been sent to me in no

unusual number or magnitude in the course of a long life, and especially during my early struggles in my profession, he was my never-failing stay, my helper, my counsellor. Childless himself, his paternal feelings (tender and hearty they were) flowed out on my children. He sometimes could and did more than fill my place. In sickness or in health his house was to them a home, and he nothing short of a father; he would suspend his own studies without reluctance to direct theirs, and never seemed to feel their presence a disturbance to his own quiet. How they gained by the love and wisdom, the quiet sympathy, and the pleasant humour, which did not enfeeble discipline, but made its presence unfelt, it is impossible for me to say or for them to forget. Pleasant, indeed, it is for me to feel that one and not the least valuable of the impressions made on them still remains fresh and strong in the hearty and reverential love they bear to his memory. Dogmersfield is still to them in recollection a home, and Uncle Charles, as they called him, a revered and beloved father. The surviving member of that household must forgive me if I cannot keep back how she and her sister contributed to the charm, which even now makes that Simorg's Nest a hallowed place in the recollections of us all.

I hope I may be forgiven if I print here a part of one even of my own letters, which I have found among a number preserved by Keble, and returned to me

by his brother. It is in remarkable harmony with what I have just written.

"My dearest John Keble,—I think I know how you must feel the blow which has lighted on us both in the departure of our most dear friend at Dogmersfield, and I cannot help writing a line to you. I naturally turn to the last survivor of the Corpus band to which I was so tenderly united, and I have been thinking over the days when, rough and rude as I was, he and you and others accepted me into that choice little circle. I have been thinking, too, how ever since, on occasion after occasion when I have wanted the advice, or the comfort, or the help of a friend, he never failed me. How wise and good he was! I do not think I exaggerate when I say he was the wisest man in the best sense I have ever been familiar with, and yet how humble and how simple! In his happy retirement, with no countenance from great people, no fame in the world, how entirely free was he from envy or repining; indeed, he was incapable of both; taking a lively interest in the important matters which stirred the State or the Church, giving out his words of wisdom about them, but not desiring to be taking any part in them. How often have I thought of that little Nest and the slender tie on which so much happiness, and the exercise of so much goodness, in that place, hung, and now that tie is rent asunder. I presume you and I shall meet at his grave."

His saltem accumulem donis.

## CHAPTER IV.

FINAL EXAMINATION.—ELECTION AT ORIEL.—UNIVERSITY PRIZES. — SIDMOUTH. — ORDINATIONS.—FIRST CURACY.

KEBLE passed his final examination in Easter Term, 1810, and was placed in both First Classes. Up to that time no one had earned this distinction but Sir Robert Peel, with whose examination the University was ringing when I matriculated. Keble's youth, and what seemed, but I believe only seemed, imperfect preparation, made his success the more remarkable. It was a joy to us personally for the love we bore him, and a triumph, too, beyond that which a College always feels for distinction won by one of its members. In our little circle we had known that he had doubted whether he should be able to prepare himself in both lines, and some of that doubt had perhaps spread amongst us as to the result; but both his tutors, Brydges the Mathematical, as well as Cooke, had urged him on, and they judged his powers more accurately than we. I now see from his letters to his father that at the very crisis of his preparation he was also writing both for the Latin and English Verse Prizes. I was not aware of it at the time. He knew, I dare say, that I was competing also, and

therefore made no communication to me. The English Verses I have never seen; some of the Latin appear in his correspondence with his father, sent to him for his censure. I wish I could have recovered the letters in which he must have announced to his father his success and his disappointment, they would surely have been very interesting. All his letters to his father which I have seen are in the affectionate and unpretending spirit of a boy, open-hearted yet deferential, considerate as to the expense he was occasioning, and shewing a strong desire to relieve him from it.

With a view to this I find him in one proposing to stand for a Fellowship at Magdalen, which it was probable some circumstances would shortly throw open. But the character he had now attained put an end to any scheme of this kind, by opening to him the prospect of the great distinction of a Fellowship at Oriel.

He was elected a Probationer Fellow there on the 20th of April, 1811, wanting then a few days of having completed his nineteenth year; and took his place at the High Table and in the Senior Common-room among that body, which even then gave the tone to the intellectual pursuits of the University, and which within a few years, by the gradual accession of remarkable men, was to acquire name and celebrity far and wide, and to originate a movement of which the effects are still felt through every part of the

Church of England. Whately entered it with him, and they found Copleston and Davison in the lead of it. I well remember being there as Keble's guest, and being struck with the remarkable deference with which these two were treated; it was such as somewhat to check the social pleasure of the party.

His progress was now rapid. In 1812 he won the Prizes for both the Bachelor's Essays, the English on Translation from Dead Languages, the Latin a comparison of Xenophon and Julius Cæsar as Military Historians of Campaigns in which they had been themselves engaged. This was an honour at that time unprecedented; indeed, the Latin Essay Prize had only been founded by Lord Grenville in 1810, but the same success has been very rarely achieved since; twice only, I believe; and in one of those instances by no less a man than my old school-fellow and friend, H. H. Milman, the late Dean of St. Paul's. Lord Grenville on all these occasions testified his sense of "the very commendable industry and exertion, as well as of the merit of the compositions," by a present of valuable books beyond the regular Prize, which was a sum of money. In one of his letters, from which I shall have occasion to make an extract, Keble refers to his Plutarch very amusingly.

Being resident, and without College office, he soon became engaged in private tuition, and in the Long Vacation of 1813 a small party of pupils gathered round him at Sidmouth, where he rented a picturesque

cottage (Myrtle Cottage) out of the town, the garden being bordered by the Sid, and within a few minutes walk of the sea. This was the property of Cornish's father, and adjoining to the Salcombe-hill grounds, where the Cornish family, a numerous and bright one of both sexes, resided. He had seen the sea for the first time at Cowes in the preceding summer, and had given vent to his feelings in some beautiful lines; but he had been very little of a traveller, and the beauties even of this comparatively tame part of Devonshire struck him very much. Writing to an old pupil (Mr. Bliss) he says,—

"As I came into Devonshire in the dark, and consequently could not (though very *quick-sighted*) see a great deal of the country, I was not a little delighted on waking the next morning to find myself in a little Paradise."

At this time I had gone through my examination, and was passing my vacation at my own home at Ottery St. Mary. The foot-way from one place to the other was over the steep ridge which divides the two valleys of the Sid and the Otter, the distance not more than six miles, and the views on the way remarkably beautiful. It was a delightful walk, and the frequent intercourse between us was principally kept up on foot over the hill. At the termination of the ridge where it drops down with a steep descent into the Sidmouth Gap, are the remains of an Armada beacon, according to the tradition of the country.

These, at the time I speak of, were not, as now they are, suffered to be overgrown and hidden by a plantation of firs. There on the short green turf we often rested and enjoyed a view which for beauty, variety, and extent is not easily to be surpassed. At our feet was spread out Harpford-wood as a grand carpet laid on a surface here and there deeply indented, and beyond lay the rich and wooded valley of the Otter; thence the ground rises in successive ranges of hills, until you reach the higher outlines of Dartmoor. Down deep on our left lay Sidmouth and the blue sea; this sea-view is interrupted by the bluff and wooded landward end of Peak-hill, and opens again beyond this to a wide range of sea and sea-coast, down to and beyond the Berry Head, the westernmost point of Torbay. It needs not to be said how Keble enjoyed this, and I hope I may be excused for borrowing Wordsworth's verse,—

> "We talked with open heart and tongue
> Affectionate and true."

Those who have never known Keble familiarly or only in later life, will scarcely be prepared to hear with how quick a relish he entered into the gaieties of Sidmouth. At this time Torquay was little more than a fishing village, and Sidmouth, though a small place, was much frequented by families seeking to combine the pursuit of health for the delicate, with that of amusement for the strong. It was consequently

as much a winter watering-place as a summer, and much of social intercourse was maintained all through the winter. No one was better received than Keble, and no one, I may add, seemed to enjoy more heartily the morning or evening parties, the concerts, and dances, which were frequent; the scenery and the society both found him impressionable, and as was natural they had their effect upon his poetical powers; he composed more often and better than he had ever done before. I am reminded by a note of my own to him at the time how much I was struck with this; in it I urged him to cultivate powers which now seemed to me unquestionable, and, looking after so many years with the colder judgment of age on the poems he then produced, I see no reason to alter my opinion. They seem to me to promise all that he afterwards performed. I will insert one specimen written but a few days before he was to leave Sidmouth, and addressed "Nunquam audituræ:"—

How can I leave thee all unsung,
  While my heart owns thy dear control,
And heaven and love have o'er thee flung
  The softest moonlight of the soul?
Oh, I have long'd for thee to call
Soft Echo from the West Wind's hall,
  Some notes as blithely wild to seek,
As the wild music of thy voice,
As the wild roses that rejoice
  In thine eye's sunshine, on thy glowing cheek.

For not the breath of mortal praise
Thine artless beauty dares profane;
For thee wild nature wakes her lays,
And thy soul feels the blessed strain.
The song that breaks the grove's repose,
The shower-drop nestling in the rose,
The brooklet's morning melody,
To these with soft and solemn tone
Thy spirit stirs in unison,
Owning the music of its native sky.

And when in some fair golden hour
Thy heart-strings shall give back the sigh,
Of Love's wild harp, no earthly bower
Shall lend such hues as bloom to die.
But earnest of the eternal spring,
Their amarant wreaths shall angels bring;
And preluding the choir of heaven,
Soft Eden gales shall sweep the lyre,
And starlike points of guiltless fire
From God's own altar-flame to gem thy brow be given.

It is my pride that I can deem,
Though faintly, of that being's worth,
Who to the All-gracious mind shall seem
Meet help for thee in heaven and earth.
Long as before Life's gale I drive,
Shall holiest hope within me live,
Thee fair, thee blessed while I view;
And when the port of endless rest
Receives me, may my soul be blest
With everlasting upward gaze on you.

It is needless surely to point out how even at this

early period of his life what might have been a mere love-song became in his way of dealing with it elevated (perhaps too elevated) and holy from the habitual holiness and elevation of all his serious thoughts.

Neither his employment nor the attractions of Sidmouth, however, prevented Keble from occasional expeditions into the country, and I remember well that he and one of his pupils, Mr. Gaussen, with myself, under the guidance of my father, whose good taste and familiarity with the country made him the best of guides, rode from Sidmouth to and through the north of Devon and the adjoining parts of Somersetshire. On our return to the neighbourhood of Exeter we parted, and Keble and his pupil went on to Plymouth and the Tamar. He was new to scenery so beautiful or romantic as that which he went through in the course of this tour. It delighted him at the time, and produced a permanent impression on his mind, of which traces may be seen not merely in his correspondence, but in his poems. He left Sidmouth with much regret, and was much regretted by many whom he left; by none perhaps more than the fine family of his landlord, with whom he contracted abiding intimacy; and cemented more closely the friendship already subsisting between himself and George Cornish.

Not long after his return to Oxford in December, 1813, on the proposition of Davison, and by the advice of Copleston and his father, he consented to

fill the office of Examining Master from the following Michaelmas, and he set himself diligently to prepare for the work. He had great misgivings, as was to be expected in one at once so young and so modest; and it was a great comfort to him that not long after Cardwell, two or three years his senior, was joined to him as colleague; the two thoroughly understood each other, and agreed on the principles which should govern them. There was no need for his apprehensions. From several persons examined by him, I have heard that the simplicity and kindness of his manner, his thorough acquaintance with the matter of the examination, together with his entire freedom from desire of displaying himself,—too common a failing, as has been said, of examining masters,—made him very effective and popular in the Schools. It has happened to me more than once to meet with men in after life who were and continued personally strangers to him, but who had carried out of the Schools and retained through life a loving estimation of him merely from his examination of them.

It was during his preparation for the office that I find in his letters the first entry on a subject which thenceforward it pleased God to give him almost constant cause to dwell on,—the illness, I mean, of one or other of those most dear to him. His letters to me in the spring and summer of 1814 mention the illnesses of two of his sisters, the eldest Eliza-

beth, Sarah the next in order of birth; the latter was carried off by consumption in that summer; and it must be interesting to see even at this early period how definite and cheerful were his convictions in regard to the Intermediate state of the departed Christian. Thus he wrote to me:—

"Not that I have been so much overwhelmed by what I have lately seen and heard as to be unable to write, or to enter into common subjects. Indeed, when I look back, I wonder at my own hard-heartedness. I do not believe there has been one day since my dear sister was given over, that I have not been able to go on with my reading as usual. Yet I do not think it is insensibility, that I have been able to divert my thoughts from her so much, but chiefly because I had suffered so much from suspense, which in such cases always leads me to expect and imagine worse than the worst. Another thing is, that I cannot even now persuade myself I have lost her, except out of my sight. That she is happy I have (blessed be God for it!) the firmest faith, and that in her happiness she remembers us, whom living she never forgot, I fondly persuade myself. Whenever I think of this, (and I have now made the thought habitual,) it checks my grief, making it seem altogether selfish and unreasonable. However it be, I consider it as a great mercy that my spirits have not failed me, since they are quite wanted in the family, and that principally on Elizabeth's account, who in her helpless state feels the loss most of all, and has besides suffered greatly from her lameness within the last two or three days. Tom does admirably well, his example has been of very great advantage to me.

"*Fairford, Saturday Night, July* 2, 1814."

About the same time, too, that he was first discharging the duties of Examiner, his thoughts were much occupied about his Ordination; he was very desirous that I should adopt the same course of life as that on which he was resolved; he thought my health, which indeed at the time seemed delicate, would fail in the profession I had chosen; but his principal motive was of a higher kind. It was thus he wrote of that to which he pressed me in March, 1815. After setting out his (very exaggerated) notions of what personal advancement might be in store for me in the course I had chosen, he says:—

"I feel what it must be to forego the possibility, even though it were but just possible, of realizing such hopes as these; nor do I think anything, not even the saving health and life, would make me forego them, but for visions far more brilliant and more certain too; more brilliant in their results, inasmuch as the salvation of one soul is worth more than the framing the Magna Charta of a thousand worlds; more certain to take place, since temptations are fewer, and opportunities everywhere to be found. Can there be even among the angels a higher privilege that we can form an idea of, than the power of contributing to the everlasting happiness of our neighbour to be especially delegated and assigned to us by Almighty God? I would that I were as free from worldly care and ambition, as the thought of what I hope will be my high calling ought to make me. I know that I am never so free from evil thoughts as when these things are strongest on my mind, but how difficult to make them habitual!"

It was thus he wrote in March. On May the 20th, but a few days before his ordination, he poured out to me the genuine feelings of his heart :—

"You ask for my prayers, be assured that you have them, though cold and worthless as they are, I can hardly hope that they can do you good. But thanks be to God, there is One who can make our worthless offerings available. Pray for me, too; pray earnestly, my dear, my best friend, that He would give me His grace, that I may not be altogether unworthy of the sacred office on which I am, rashly I fear, even now entering; but that some souls hereafter may have cause to bless me. Pray that I may be freed from vanity, from envy, from discontent, from impure imaginations; that I may not grow weary, nor wander in heart from God's service; that I may not be judging others uncharitably, nor vainly dreaming how they will judge me, at the very moment that I seem most religiously and most charitably employed. Without any foolish affectation of modesty, I can truly say that the nearer the time approaches, the more strongly I feel my own unfitness and unworthiness for the ministry; yet as I hope it is not such but that it may be removed in time by earnest and constant use of the means of grace, I do not think it needful to defer my Ordination; but I want all the help I can get in the awful and difficult preparation; do not therefore forget me in your prayers. I know, indeed, you do not forget me; but make especial mention of me at this season. On Sunday next I hope to be ordained, and on Monday I go to Fairford for the summer, having engaged myself for the next six weeks to take charge of two small parishes, the churches of which are as near as Oriel and Corpus Chapels, about four miles distance from Fairford."

He was ordained Deacon on Trinity Sunday, 1815, and Priest on Trinity Sunday, 1816, both by the Bishop of Oxford, Dr. William Jackson; and in July of the latter year, writing to me and congratulating me on an event which was the prelude to the greatest happiness of my life, and uttering words of loving advice, which I look back on now with deep and grateful interest, he says:—

"You will understand all I mean to say, and cannot. I want your prayers, too; very much I want them, for every day I feel the dangers and anxieties of my profession increase upon me. Pray for me that I may not pollute God's altar with irregular, worldly-minded, self-complacent thoughts. Pray for me that I may free myself from all pride, all ambition, all uncharitableness. You cannot think how a little word which you dropped one day, the last we met together at Oxford, struck me, and how it has abode with me ever since. You cautioned me against Formalism; I thought it hard at the time, but now I know you had too good reason. Help me by your prayers, your advice, if any occurs to you; and your reproof, if you at any time think I need it, to get rid of that dangerous habit."

Little did he when he gave vent to his feelings in these remarkable passages, suppose they would ever be exposed to the light to which I am now exposing them, but I cannot believe I do wrong in publishing them; no one can doubt that they flowed from his heart, and it may be useful to many a young man under similar circumstances to see this living picture

of what Keble felt at that crisis of his life. I have more fears on another point, and yet I hope I may be forgiven for not withholding what relates to myself only. I could not separate these parts without impairing that perfect idea of him which the whole extracts now present; and I desire any one reading "The Christian Year," and the "Lyra," to bear this passage in mind when so engaged with them. I think he will see proof again and again, that these were not the passing feelings of moments of excitement, but ruling principles ever present and ever operative on his mind.

How little probably did those who with the Bishop laid their hands on Keble's head, dream at the time how holy a spirit, how powerful an agent for good, by God's blessing, they were enrolling among the ministers of the Church. On himself the impressions of the day were never weakened. Writing in June, 1827, on Trinity Sunday, to George Cornish, he says :—

"To-day I have been to an Ordination, for the first time since I was ordained myself, and I have almost made a vow to be present at one every year. I think it would do one a great deal of good, *like going back to one's native air after long intervals.*"

I must not anticipate, but I may mention in passing, that curiously enough he writes in the same letter :—

"To-morrow I correct the press of my title-page, which I need not tell you is always the last thing done in a book."

This was "The Christian Year."

There was no external manifestation of extraordinary or exclusive devotion to his calling in this commencement of his ministry, the sole charge of two parishes, East Leach and Burthorpe, small and contiguous, for six weeks in the Long-vacation; nor did he afterwards, when the engagement had become permanent, think it necessary to give up his Oxford employments, or to decline the College Tutorship when called on to take it. And yet I doubt not that they were well provided for, and that scarcely any better introduction could have been had for him to the duties to which he had devoted himself. He had his father, then in the full vigour of his faculties, for his assistant and his guide. It was a peculiar delight to him to place himself once more as a pupil under that beloved and respected guide; while as generally a resident at Oxford he had probably greater advantages for the large and well-considered study of divinity, which he now entered on.

I subjoin an extract from a letter to me written from Oxford in November, 1815, because it shews not merely his views as to worldly advancement, but also how early he took up, what he seems to

have clung to through life, the necessity of discharging his duties as son and brother in close connection with, and scarcely in subservience to those of his profession. He was never, indeed, called on to make absolutely an election between the two; the circumstances were always such, that at the most it was never necessary to do more than change the scene of his professional labours, in order to satisfy also family claims on his time and attention:—

"I have a great deal to say in answer to your first letter, in which you urge the expediency of my doing something to secure an independency if I should wish to marry. I assure you that you quite mistake me, if you suppose that I disavow entirely all feelings of ambition; on the contrary, I have a great deal of it, too much, I think, for my profession. I am far from censuring ambition in general; it were idle to blame what most people cannot help feeling: but I think I see clearly, that as a motive to my *clerical* exertions, it is either wrong in itself, or liable every moment to become so, and therefore I am sure I ought to keep it down as much as possible. With respect to my making some progress towards a maintenance, I have thought much and seriously about it. I do not see anything for a country clergyman to do in that way, except taking pupils: that I cannot do at home, nor should I like as yet to leave my father's roof; but if Elizabeth's health, which I hardly dare hope, should go on to improve, I think something may be done. I may get a curacy, and take a house, either near home, or if the sea should be recommended to her, near the coast; I have no particular re-

pugnance to the thing, and I certainly feel that there is a great deal in what you say. I do not know what my own prospects are; but let them be what they will, it is certainly right and just, that if I have opportunity, I should do something for myself; but as long as Elizabeth continues so helpless, I should not think I did right in leaving home on any *speculation*. Perhaps when Tom leaves Oxford, which he will probably do in the course of next year, we may contrive some gainful grinding scheme between us. I was very stationary all the summer, but I am a little afraid that you were right when you warned me against indolence, in the shape of low spirits, or contentedness. Yet I seemed to myself almost always busy; but when I look back, very little seems done. Making sermons took up a good part of the time; I imposed on myself a law of writing at least one every week; and then our school at Fairford required a good deal of visiting, so that altogether I am not very much *au fait* in Latin and Greek; but my nerves are more steeled, and my front more bronzed of late months, so I shall bully away in the Schools as fearlessly as ever."

I do not attach any special importance to the extract which I am now about to give from a letter, which has reached me through the kindness of Mr. Arnott, as a testimony to Keble's work in his new sphere of duty; but it is at least a very genuine and unsuspicious one, and it contains an anecdote amusing and characteristic. The writer, who now lives in Hertfordshire, had heard of the photographical Memoir of Keble, and was permitted to see the photographs. The first part of his letter ad-

dressed "to the gentleman with whom I had an interview this afternoon," relates to East Leach Church; then he proceeds thus :—

"I well remember Mr. John Keble coming to Eastleach to do duty when the Rev. B. Boyes, through age and infirmity, was unable to do it. A very great change took place in the village; he commenced a Sunday-school and the Church, and at Bouthrop (*Burthorpe*) was well attended. How long he was at East Leach I don't know, but when I went some years after, the Rev. Cooper lived at the parsonage at Bouthrop, and did duty at both churches.

"Mr. Keble used to ride to and fro from Oxford, and on Sunday used to dine at a cottager's, for which he paid, and used to charge them not to provide anything extra for him; that was the stipulation. I have frequently defended his character. In one of his visits the person had some potatoes and herring for dinner, and he remarked after some observations, that a herring relish'd potatoes. Then some one raised a report that he should say that herring and potatoes were good enough for any one. I have frequently had to set that matter right. . . . A sturdy Baptist, a shoemaker, used to attend Bouthrop Church, stating, as a reason, he there heard the Gospel. I myself have much to be thankful for on account of Mr. Keble's ministrations." . . . .

In a postscript he adds, "Mr. Keble was outside the church what he professed to be inside it."

In 1816, in the autumn, Keble was again in Devonshire, and for part of his time a visitor at my father's house, where I then was. I have no recol-

lection of any particulars of the visit, and certainly none of that which formed the subject in part of the letter, from which I subjoin an extract. I do not know that melancholy, or despondency of spirits, was remarkable in him at any time, certainly not in later life. It has been observed, I believe, that melancholy is a common attendant on poetic genius, and good reasons may be given why it should be so. Keble, however, would have been the last at this time to think himself entitled to it as a poet; he treats it, it will be seen, as a moral fault, against which it was his duty to struggle. I have no doubt he did so, and it seemed to me through life characteristic of him that he was always ready to accept with a grateful heart and cheery disposition the blessings vouchsafed him, and to be ready to meet his trials with unfeigned resignation. His was no boding spirit, nor did he make sorrows for himself; but no one can doubt that the statement in this letter was a true account of what he really felt, and a very interesting disclosure it is. It must be added that the loss of one sister, and the suffering state of another, weighed naturally upon him, and the more because, as he was now residing at Fairford, the absence of the one, and the trials of the other, were presented to his mind more constantly:—

"FAIRFORD, *Oct.* 9, 1816.

"MY DEAREST FRIEND,

"This is to greet your return to love, law, and London, and to thank you for ten of the happiest days I have spent

for many years, yet those not half so happy as they ought to have been. I do not know whether you find it, but I hardly ever part from those that I love much and seldom see, without a strong feeling of dissatisfaction with myself, and feeling that I have by no means made the most of my time, and that I have thrown away many precious opportunities for some of the greatest enjoyments of life; and this has been more especially the case since our domestic distresses; they have furnished me with too good an excuse for indulging a certain humour calling itself melancholy, but I am afraid, more truly entitled proud and fantastic, which I find very often at hand, forbidding me to enjoy the good things, and pursue the generous studies, which a kind Providence throws so richly in my way; then the hours which I spend alone, owing to the distance of my Cure from home, are many, and I have indulged myself in a sad trick of filling them up with melancholy presages. I have long known this to be very wrong, but I never felt the mischief of it so much as in the midst of your happy family party. I felt as if I was saddening everybody, and thousands and thousands of resolutions did I make that I *would* shake off this selfish remembrance of past and distant calamities, that I *would* enjoy myself wherever I went. I trust I shall be able, though late, to accomplish these good resolutions, but it will be a long and steady course of self-discipline alone, grounded upon high motives, and assisted by the prayers, advice, and example of my relations and friends, which will enable me, by God's blessing, to do so. And to whose prayers, advice, and example, shall I have recourse so unreservedly as to yours. My dear fellow you *cannot think* how I depend on you. I have never thought of you in my blackest dreams, without consolation and hope; for you, as you know, my presages were never melancholy; and now I am endeavouring to brace myself up

to a little more activity and cheerfulness, nothing upon earth animates me more than the brightening view which I take of your prospects. May they never be clouded by calamity, they will not I am sure by wilful melancholy, as mine have sometimes been. This is not mock-modesty, I assure you; it is the plain and simple truth, and I tell it you because it relieves me to tell it, and because I shall expect you to talk to me sharply, and rouse me from my selfishness, whenever in my correspondence or conversation you discover any sign of it. Certainly I have no hereditary right to it; all my relations, and chiefly she who has suffered most, are disposed to make the best of things; it is a morbid habit of my own contracting, and may, and shall, by God's blessing, be cured. It must be so for the comfort of all whom I ought to make happy, and still more for my own happiness, for I feel more and more every day that I cannot be quite happy alone, and certainly if I am a hypochondriac, I cannot be happy in company. And so ends my sentimentality, and so, like the German Baron in Goldsmith, jumping over the stools,

"'Sh' apprens d'être vif.'"

I will add an extract from another letter to me, dated from Fairford, in June, 1817, in part on the same subject, but interesting also as shewing his judgment at that time on Jeremy Taylor and Milton. He is speaking principally of the prose works of the latter, but he was not a hearty lover of his poetry even in later life. He never could separate the work from the author, and to a great extent they are inseparable, but there is danger of disparaging good poetry on account of a supposed bad writer of it,

and even more perhaps of overvaluing an indifferent work, from a liking and high estimation of the author. I do not think Keble entirely escaped either danger:—

"FAIRFORD,
"*June* 2, 1817.

"I shall be inexcusable if I do not get into a habit of looking at the bright side of things, and shake off entirely a certain perverse pleasure, in which perhaps you may not conceive how any man should indulge himself, of turning over in my thoughts a huge heap of blessings, to find one or two real or fancied evils (which after all are sure to turn out goods) buried among them.

"Next to the books which it is my duty to study, I find none so useful in helping me to considerations of this kind, as your and my friend and favourite Jeremy Taylor. Though I have been long acquainted with him, I never read his 'Holy Living and Dying' regularly till this spring, and I cannot tell you the delight it has given me; surely that book is enough to convert any infidel, so gentle in heart, and so high in mind, so fervent in zeal, and so charitable in judgment, that I confess I do not know any other author, except perhaps Hooker, (whose subjects are so different that they will hardly bear a comparison,) worthy to be likened to him. Spenser I think comes nearest his spirit in all respects. Milton is like him in richness and depth, but in morality seems to me as far below him as pride is below humility. I have been looking into some of his prose works lately, of which, I am ashamed to say, I was and am grossly ignorant; but what will you think of me, when I own to you, that I was hardly ever so shocked and mortified in my life; perhaps I shall make some amends by my unbounded admiration of many passages;

perhaps you will attribute it all to cavalierish and episcopalian prejudices, but certainly I shut the book with an increased veneration for his abilities, and a very much diminished confidence in his opinions, and affection for his general character. But I must try to get rid of the dislike, and lay his faults, if I can, upon times and circumstances, and not upon himself, for it is quite uncomfortable to think of such a man as from some places I was inclined to do. At any rate it must be a most impressive warning to men of genius, to read, as they often may I think in his Tracts, one sentence written as if an angel had held the pen, and the next, (as it seemed to me,) more like Cobbett's style than any other I know of. One thing rather pleases me, (as every body likes to be confirmed in his old prejudices,) that the spirit of the loyal party in those times should seem so much more candid and charitable than that of the Puritans. Where will you find in Taylor, or Hammond, or Chillingworth, or Saunderson, or even in Clarendon, such a gross, puerile, illiberal, (not to say dishonest) invective, as Milton, evidently, *ad captandum vulgus*, has put into his Iconoclastes against K. Charles's Chaplains? How little did he dream that Taylor's name would go down to posterity side by side with his own, and the other three but a little below it.

"But enough of this declamation."

# CHAPTER V.

## TUTORSHIP AND SECOND RESIDENCE AT ORIEL.—DEATH OF MRS. KEBLE.—1818—1823.

KEBLE, having served as Public Examiner in the Final Schools, had after a short interval undertaken the duty of Examiner in the Responsions. This last wearied him a good deal, and when it was performed, early in 1817, he had quitted Oxford, as he thought, "no more to return officially." He quitted it with delight.

"I assure you," he wrote, "it is quite a relief to me to have got rid of my Oxford employment: I got quite tired of the Little-Go, and more so of that prince of absurdities "Determining,"—the very smell of the Schools sickened me; and I am now free to give myself up entirely to my profession—my dear delightful profession—which I grow fonder of every day; and yet every day proves to me what a burden it is, and how much remains to be done before I can be at all fit to bear it. I need your prayers, and trust I have them; I do assure you you are never forgotten in mine."

Thus he wrote in March, 1817. Oxford, however, retained a strong hold on his affections, and he was not yet to have done with her.

"Though," says he, in Nov. 1817, "I am so near to Oxford, and have such regular calls there, in comparison

of yours, I can yet enter completely into your feelings towards the place: every time I go there, I feel like a miser looking over his old chests, and thinking how much money he has wasted in his youth; the last time I was there, in particular, I had the temptation very strong upon me to stay and plunge myself into the walks, libraries, and cathedral services for a year: but conscience prevailed, and I came back to the Cotswolds."

It was to be expected, that if a vacancy should occur in the Tutorships of Oriel, he would be called on to fill it; and although it would be an interruption to the scheme of life which he had laid down for himself, it was pretty clear to all who knew him, that coming in the shape of a duty, which he owed to the College as Fellow, he would scarcely consider himself at liberty to decline it. At the same time, I may observe, the obligations of a Fellow to his College were not, at the period I speak of, so strictly regarded as I hope and believe they now are. Fellowships were often sought after, and obtained by very conscientious men, merely as distinctions or as helps to the pursuit of a profession elsewhere; and indeed, unless a Fellow engaged himself in tuition, or specially in some study, for which residence in the University was desirable, there were not wanting reasons enough in a great many instances, to apply to a Fellow the common saying, that his room was more desirable than his company; there being a great demand for the former, and the residence of an unem-

ployed young Fellow being often of little advantage, or even detrimental to the discipline of the Undergraduates.

It was with mixed feelings, however, and not without scruple, that Keble gave up even for a time his home and his curacy; but he was the more easily reconciled to this, as it was arranged that his brother should take his place in both, and he also looked forward to passing his vacations principally at Fairford, and at all times still taking part in the duties of East Leach. I find it stated in Mr. Moor's carefully prepared memoir, that he was appointed College Tutor in Michaelmas Term, 1818, but I rather think it was very late in 1817 that he was applied to to take the office; and that he was engaged in the regular discharge of its duties in the very beginning of 1818. On Jan. 29 of that year he writes to me thus, dating from Fairford, and the letter will shew in part the feelings which actuated him in accepting the office.

"I am afraid you think me quite an incorrigible fellow in the matter of correspondence: but to confess the truth I purposely kept from writing to you as long as I hung in doubt about migrating to Oriel; and by the time I had made up my mind, I was got into a bad habit of not writing; and I need not tell such a philosopher as you are, how hard it is to break bad habits. I would not ask your advice, whether I should turn Tutor or no, because I knew beforehand what it would be, and I was afraid, like Noel,

of being convinced by your sophistry. However, I might just as well have done it, and then made a merit of yielding; as I have done to my friends here and at Oxford. I thought at first it would be a very uncomfortable thing to me to give up my Cure, and become an Academic again; but I get more and more reconciled to it every day. You consider Tuition as a species of pastoral care, do you not? otherwise it might seem questionable, whether a clergyman ought to leave a cure of souls for it. And yet there are some people at Oxford who seem to imagine that College Tutors have nothing to do with the morale. If I thought so, I would never undertake the office; but I feel some difficulty in settling with myself beforehand, how far one ought to carry one's interference with the general conduct of a pupil; probably it is impossible to draw a precise line."

On March 5, 1818, he dates from Oriel, and writes thus:—

"Here I am, regularly re-matriculated, and to say the truth, in many things as great a freshman as ever; I would not have believed it on anything less than experience, how much difference two or three years' absence from a place can make in one's knowledge of its ways, and fitness to live in it. But now it is no longer a wonder to me that old men should find so much difficulty in accommodating themselves to new fashions, or that they should have so little sympathy with their juniors. In both these, as in many other respects, I seem to have found myself much older than I ought to be. But perhaps I shall find the work slide more easily out of hand, when I am a little more used to it. . . . .

"You would have been delighted to have walked round the Meadow the other day, and heard old Dyson discussing sundry subjects for sermons, with which he means to edify his flock. Now he has taken in earnest to Divinity, what an admirable divine he will make. I, of course, having just left my parish, envy every man who is just going to his; exactly as when I go back to it again (which in process of time I think not unlikely) I shall envy every College Tutor; —just as we are now regretting the loss of Davison here, having taken so little pains to improve his presence among us. However, I shall not have done with East Leach, in all probability, till October, and then Tom will take to it; so that they will rather be gainers than losers on the whole at our home by the change, for I shall be there half the year, and Tom the whole of it.

"I live in fear and dread of some row about the first clock or the second, or some other rebellion of ancient standing, rising up to push me from my stool of office; in vengeance for the part I took (by your instigation, mind) in that 'Great Rebellion,' which, as Arnold says, secured the liberty of the subject at Corpus. But hitherto they have all behaved remarkably well. I am going to live in Davison's rooms, just opposite Tucker and Cornish. I only hope I shall not be practicalized to death.

"You must not wonder very much, if you see me come up to London to buy furniture some time within the fortnight. Pray tell your hatter, when next you walk through St. James'-street or the Haymarket (I forget which) to send me a new hat, moderately fashionable, *immediately*, as the old shovel to which Patteson paid so much respect, was quite spoiled by the snow last Sunday week; and I am afraid my pupils will mock me, if they see me in a bad hat. The man has my measure."

Again, on April 30, 1818, he writes from Oriel :—

"I rejoiced to hear of your second pupil—who is he? I hope another Pennington: and so the long old dusky desk is after all of some use. I used to look at it with an eye of commiseration, as I do sometimes at my Plutarch, with this inward cogitation: 'Oh that there were any chance of thy being of use to thy owner.'"

This refers to the present from Lord Grenville, which I have spoken of before: and when he speaks of his fears of death by the slow process of practicalization, those who are not familiar with Oxford should be told, that the front of Corpus faces the side of Oriel in which his windows were, the street between being so narrow that he was within point blank range of a pea-shooter or any other equally manly arm of offence from the young Tutors of Corpus.

"Well here I am settled after a manner in Oriel, and very comfortable I find it—not yet quite so comfortable as my home and curacy: that was not to be expected; but I take to the work, and to the solitude, far more kindly than I expected I should. We have a remarkably good gentlemanly set, especially of Gentlemen-Commoners. None of them, except perhaps one or two, are great readers, but they nearly all learn their lectures, and most of them are very well behaved. Two of the best come to me as 'peculiar grinder' (I must have a little slang, though Davison's face should glare on me from the opposite pannel), they are Baring, one of the banker's sons, and Fremantle, a son of the Admiral, delightful fellows both; and what does me

more good than anything, we get up and set to work at six in the morning; so that I can get everything done and get out for exercise at one o'clock."

I have not stinted myself in the extracts from these letters, because I am anxious above all things to present a true and minute picture of Keble in every principal stage of his life; his Tutorship at Oriel was one of these, and his letters are artless and unconscious paintings of himself by himself. I have not therefore withdrawn even so trifling a matter as his playful allusion to what he calls the "Great Rebellion," an almost incredibly childish dispute which we of the *first class* at Corpus had had with our Tutor respecting the time at which we were to commence and end our lecture. Corpus hours were regulated by the Christ Church clocks, of which there were two, the one always five minutes before the other; and I think we earnestly contended and thought that we ought to begin by the later, and end by the earlier, thus effecting *a saving* of ten minutes in the hour. It is amusing now to think of Keble and Arnold engaged in this conflict; we were indeed merely great boys in heart, though nearly all of us about soon to win our places in the Schools as First Class *men*. But though Arnold was pleased to declare that we had secured the liberty of the subject, the love of historic truth compels me to admit, that our excellent Tutor, who preserved his good humour

through the whole, as indeed did the rebels also, obtained the substantial victory, enforced the standard imperial measure for the hour, and extracted from us a good sixty minutes' attendance. I have no doubt, however, that in the commencement of his Tutorship, Keble—young, modest, and sensitive as he was, and almost a stranger in his College—really felt some of the alarm which he speaks of. But this must have soon passed off: he never repented of the time which he spent as Tutor at Oriel; he felt, no doubt, that though for the time he was diverted from the main plan of his life, and to a certain extent lost what he valued so dearly, the full care of his curacies and the society of home, he was yet discharging a duty which he owed to his College; and by the view he wisely took of the nature of that duty, as indicated in these extracts, the diversion, temporary only, was never a wide one.

He was cast too on happy times for the performance of it; Oriel then stood incontestably at the head of the University; in spite of some constitutional infirmities, Dr. Copleston was an admirable Head, accurate in his scholarship, correct in his taste, studious in the acquisition of knowledge, impartial in his discipline, and, though last hardly least, liberal in his hospitality. He was, too, at this time in full vigour and activity of mind and spirits, in the commencement of his career as Provost, and entering heartily into all its duties. The rigid impartiality and good sense with

which the elections to Fellowships were conducted, had succeeded in forming a very remarkable body in the Common-Room. No undue weight in the competition was given to the place which had been acquired in the Class-paper, a matter on which good fortune in many ways has, too often and yet unavoidably, great influence; but the Electors steadily aimed at finding out the candidate in whom appeared the happiest combination of scholarship, intellect, and character, and the whole Examination was conducted with this object in view.

Tutors eminent for ability and acquirements were a natural consequence of all this; and whatever may be said in disparagement of the wisdom of parents in regard to the education of their children, I believe no attraction to a College is found so invariably strong as a staff of eminent Tutors. All these circumstances made Oriel at this time the favourite College, especially, perhaps, for those who really desired to pursue the studies of the University steadily. The applicants for admission were far beyond the vacancies, so that a selection might be made from among them.

It must not be supposed that when Keble speaks of having everything done, and his going out for exercise at one o'clock, his labours for the day were over so early; he was diligent in preparing his lectures, and complains in some of his letters that he had no time for his own private reading. He attached himself affectionately to his pupils, and many

of them attached themselves with equal warmth to him. His manner with them at lecture was perfectly simple and unpretending; if he was ignorant and unable to answer a question or explain a difficulty, there was no attempt at concealment; nor could any pupil fail to see that his well-doing was at least as great a cause of happiness to his Tutor as to himself. Misbehaviour or idleness, it was obvious, gave him sincere pain. Intimacies, of course, did not always grow up from the intercourse of the pupil room, or they might afterwards cease from separation and other causes; but some lifelong friendships were so made; one in especial may be mentioned in a word even here. Baring, of whom he speaks, (the second Lord Ashburton,) introduced Sir William Heathcote to him, of whom, in a letter to me in 1821, he speaks as "one of his greatest comforts at Oxford." Heathcote read with him at extra hours (as Baring and Fremantle, the present Sir Thomas, had done), and the bond which united them was never loosened. One fruit, as is well known, was his becoming in after life the Vicar of Hursley, a circumstance which, in more ways than are at once apparent, influenced and coloured the remainder of his days.

I had married later in the same year in which he became Tutor, and was very soon plunged into the anxieties of a sick house and the early struggles of a difficult profession. Our personal intercourse, therefore, was very much interrupted, but our inti-

mate correspondence continued. He had been of course privy to my engagement, and watched its progress with affectionate interest; now my serious anxieties caused his letters to be more frequent, and to overflow not only with affectionate sympathy, but with the most wholesome consolations. I shall be excused for making this short mention of my own affairs in order to introduce one or two of his letters on these subjects during this period of our lives. The manner in which he speaks of me must, of course, be set down to the warmth of his feelings. Once for all I may say this, and I do so most unfeignedly; I can neither omit such passages where they occur, nor alter them; they are interwoven with the context, and seem to me necessary not more to the accuracy of the extracts than of the portrait I seek to give of the writer. He dates from Oriel on December 6, 1818:—

"My dearest Friend,

"Edward gave me an account the other day, which distressed me a good deal, of your Mary's health. I trust Dyson's more favourable report will be confirmed; comfortable man that he is, he always brings cheerfulness with him. These occasional illnesses were what we reckoned on, and therefore we must not be alarmed unreasonably when they do occur. I know, however, that come what will, you and she are provided with strength and comfort beyond what I can imagine, Only bear up, and you will soon, very soon, have to rejoice. I confess I am rather

glad that you have so much business upon your hands, as it will force you to keep up your spirits and take care of yourself, a most essential duty of a good nurse. Do not trouble yourself about writing to me, except you are quite in the humour for it. I shall hear of you many ways.

"After all, these anxieties are the greatest of mercies; they are, I verily believe, the only effectual means to wean us from our idols. We may make good resolutions, and do much towards keeping them, but there is something so subtle and insinuating in earthly happiness (and the more so in proportion to its innocence and purity), that one such pang, or misgiving, as leaves a lasting impression of its insecurity, will do more towards lifting our hearts where they ought to be, than all that most of us could, or at least would, do for ourselves. At least, from my own experience, I can truly say that I *know* I ought to be (I am afraid I am not) more thankful to my Lord and Master for His fatherly chastisements, than for all the comforts and indulgences He has aflorded me. My dear Coleridge, do not imagine because I write in this strain that I have heard any very discouraging reports; but I have found so much comfort in some late instances in having thoroughly made up my mind to the worst beforehand, that I cannot help recommending it to my friends. But indeed I trust that your good and happy union will yet continue many, many years. It is happy for you that I have it not in my power to ensure it; for it would certainly be done, whether for the better or the worse; but I *can* pray for it, and that I will with my best endeavours, and so will they, who may better hope to be heard, all your good and kind friends, and the many who are indebted to you beyond what wealth could repay. I have particularly begged that Elizabeth would remember you both.

"My dear friend, may God bless you for Christ's sake, and may I soon see you again all well and happy. I shall write soon I hope something better than this scrawl, which I am almost afraid to send, but you know my meaning. Ever, ever yours, J. K."

It will be well to conclude this personal episode without interruption. I was mercifully spared the great evil, which I seemed to have reason to fear, when he wrote the last letter; and in July, 1819, became a father, and some months of great happiness followed; but in April, 1820, we were deprived of our child. Many who have suffered the same affliction, the loss of their first and only child, will know how bitterly it wounds young parents, and they will best appreciate the letter which he wrote to me on that occasion, and will thank me, I believe, for inserting it here.

"Oriel College,
"*April* 26, 1820.

"My dearest Friend,

"It is presumption in me, I know, to pretend to comfort you on so sad an occasion as this, but I *must* tell you truly that my heart bleeds at the thought of your loss, though I know it is absolutely impossible for me to sympathize with you under it; but you have better comforters who do, not only James Coleridge and dear John Patteson, but a more effectual one than either, even Him who 'when He saw a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, had compassion on her.' He is even now touched with a feel-

ing of the sorrow of heart which has fallen upon you and your dear wife, whom GOD bless, confirm, and comfort for His sake. My dear friends, think as little as you can of yourselves, but think of the blessed infant whom you presented so few days ago before CHRIST in His earthly temple; think of her being even now admitted to serve Him in His heavenly temple day and night, and knowing and praising Him infinitely better than the greatest saint on earth can do; and though it is nothing in comparison of eternity, yet it is blessing enough to assuage your grief, which, however good and Christian, must confess itself to be but earthly, when you consider that your darling is put into her SAVIOUR'S arms so many years before the time that most of His servants are admitted there, *quite* safe, *quite* good, *quite* happy, and, I dare to say it, overflowing with love for you beyond what all your kindness and tenderness could have made her comprehend in the longest life that parents and children can expect to enjoy together here. And although David said his child could not return to him, yet since we are taught that there is a sympathy between Paradise and Earth, at least between the saints in one and the saints in the other, what if Christian parents, by holy living, should be supposed to have this comfort among others, that their lost children still watch over them, or in some way or other know of their well-doing? The thought is not, I am persuaded, unscriptural, but thank GOD you have no need of it. 'For if we believe that JESUS died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in JESUS will GOD bring with Him.' You need not look farther for comfort than those words. May He in whom alone we can know comfort, make them and all other consolations which His Providence has in store for you, so truly comfortable to you, that you shall be able to look backward even to this sad

time with humble thankfulness to Him for helping you to suffer as Christians; so prays from the bottom of his heart,

"Your affectionate friend,

"J. KEBLE.

"If it will be any comfort to you at all for me to come up for a day or two I shall be thankful, and can do it without inconvenience.

"Tell dear Patteson I longed to write to him, but was afraid of distressing him, not knowing till I came back here how graciously he is upholden. GOD bless him and you, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST."

The message in the postscript to my dear friend John Patteson, between whom and Keble a friendship had sprung up, had reference to the far heavier affliction, which but a little before had befallen him, in the loss of his wife.

To return from this personal digression, which has carried me out of the order of events. He was much disturbed in the summer of 1819 in the comfortable discharge of his duties as Tutor, by the alarming illness of his brother, on whom, as I have said, he had reckoned to supply his place in the family circle and in his parish. Never were two brothers more attached to each other. Of the younger, now the only survivor of that generation, I do not feel at liberty to say more than that from his great modesty and retiringness, and from his having been over-shadowed, as it were, by his brother's great reputation, the world knows much less of him than in justice it ought to

have done. In May, 1819, a severe and neglected cold appeared to have settled on his lungs. Dr. Bourne, of Oxford, who was the family physician, was not very encouraging, and the symptoms did not for some time abate under treatment. Writing to Dyson about him, Keble mentions that there had been a negotiation on foot for his becoming one of the Tutors of Corpus, which of course was interrupted by this illness. He says,—

"I was afraid this might have annoyed him and pressed on his spirits, but I am glad to find it does not. He is perfectly calm and placid, wrapped up in the same thoughts which I verily believe have long taken up his whole mind, for I know he does not expect to recover. I know you will give us your prayers, my dear fellow."

It was an addition to Keble's personal trial that he could only see his brother from week to week, as he went down to take his duty for him. But he and the family were mercifully spared the great affliction of losing him. In June he began to mend, and the Long Vacation coming on, Keble was able to be with him, and regularly supply his place in his church. All this he communicated of course to me, and I must find room for his grateful and wise reflections on the event. Writing on June 15, 1819, from Oriel, he says,—

"His recovery, amendment I should say (for though his cough is much abated and all the symptoms far milder, the

complaint does not seem yet entirely removed), came upon me, and I believe upon most of our family, almost like a resurrection. Without saying so to one another, I fancy we had almost all of us made up our minds to the parting; and now how to be thankful enough for so great a mercy as his being spared to us I know not. The near prospect of so great a loss (humanly speaking) brought home to me a lesson which I have before now preached to you, and shewed me how little used I was to practise it myself—I mean the duty of preparing oneself, by constant meditation, for all the worst privations that can befall one in this world. My dear friend, I was and am quite ashamed to find how utterly wanting I was at heart in what I have been so long teaching others, and under special engagements to practise myself. However, the example of all at home, and particularly that of Tom himself, who took everything with the most perfect calmness, did me a good deal of good, and I wish and pray every day that all this may not be lost upon me. It certainly is, when we consider it calmly, and in any other case but our own,—it certainly is no more than plain reason and common sense for any one, who believes in our gracious Master and His promises, to throw his whole care, both for himself and those dearest to him, *wholly* and entirely upon Him. The way of putting the thought which seemed to relieve me most when my fears were at worst, and I was most tempted to set my heart upon Tom's recovery, was this:—If I were thoroughly sure of his being restored to health after a certain time, I should be most content and thankful; now in fact I am morally sure of his being restored to infinitely more than earthly health, though I do not exactly know the time. I dwelt upon this thought, and it seemed so exactly what I wanted, that I have just put it down for the

chance of its suggesting something to you; though I well know, my dear friend, that your griefs are beyond the skill of any worldly comforter, yet I will say to you, 'Be of good comfort;' for I feel that I have a right to do it. The greatness of your affliction, borne as you are endeavouring to bear it, is a sure pledge and proof that you are under the immediate hand of Him into whose hands it is good to fall because His mercies are great. You may apply to yourself, or if you are afraid of that, you may at least apply to the dear sufferer for whom you are so anxious, all those great and glorious promises which the Scripture holds out to martyrs and confessors, and to them whose souls are in the immediate and special keeping of the Redeemer. What would one not give to be quite sure of this? and I verily believe there is nothing which comes so near to assuring us of it in this life as very great affliction borne Christianly for His sake. When one has such a source of comfort as this, it is superfluous, at least it would be but for our frailty, to talk of earthly friends; but as it is, the prayers and good wishes of so many servants of GOD as I firmly believe intercede for you and your's continually, that this rod may either be speedily removed, or felt as what it is doubtless meant to be, a blessing; here is another source of consolation which may now and then, I trust, innocently and effectually be used to repress that feeling of desolation which, in spite of piety and Christian knowledge, will sometimes, I know too well, intrude itself. But you have your comforts in yourself, and I am not sure whether I have said anything to the purpose. Would that my prayers for you could make up for the deficiency in what I say and write to you."

In July it was still doubtful whether the Corpus

scheme for his brother could now be carried into effect, but they were in hopes it might, as indeed it was; and after discussing this, he ends a letter to me, of July 7, 1819, thus characteristically:—

"As for myself, worthy Sir, I get on much as I used to do, always having a great load of things to do, and hardly ever finishing any thing. Tom's plans of tuition have set us upon reading together rather more than we used to do, which I find a great comfort and, I believe, advantage; one thing is that, in reading with another, one cannot stand so long poring over a passage, doubting whether you understand it or no: or perhaps but half thinking of it, a mode of wasting time of which I profess myself very guilty. We are reading over the Ethics together, and I propose going on afterwards to compare the Stagyrite with Plato, Butler, Paley, Smith, and others who have written more or less systematically on the subject. I wish also to be not unmindful of your recommendation to acquaint myself better with Greek criticism, but hardly know how to set about it. I am reading Sophocles again, and marking everything that strikes me, but I do not feel any improvement. I am afraid I shall always be σφόδρα Τεύτων in these matters. Luckily we have got one man in Oriel that cries 'whew' at a false quantity, i.e. Tyler. I am babbling on, and not telling you what I daresay you have hardly heard yet, that George Cornish was married on Saturday. Tucker and I took him as far as Lichfield on his way into Derbyshire, in doing which we went over *our old* Warwickshire tour; and I was very melancholy at the thought of what an ass I then made of myself; so to keep up my spirits I made myself twice as great an ass. All here, Tom especially, desire most loving congratulations. Ever most affectionately yours, J. K."

His letters remind me that in 1819 I was engaged in the prosecution of some of those libels, which, by a stimulating mixture of profaneness and sedition with some humour and ability, obtained great circulation at that period, and I must have consulted him as to topics for the opening which I expected to devolve on me; the trials were to be at the Quarter Sessions: a part of his advice is so full of good sense and so characteristic, that I insert it here: he dates from Fairford, Oct. 12, 1819:—

"Of one thing, were I in your place, I should be particularly careful, i.e. how I indulged myself too far in panegyrics on things as they are; at least I feel that were I on a jury, I should be much more likely to be influenced by the representations of a man who seemed to see and deplore the too palpable occasion lent by the conduct of too many Christians and loyalists to such libels as these, than I should by the flaming panegyrics which many on the right side (e.g. the 'Courier,' and sometimes the 'British Critic') are continually trumpeting forth. To say the truth, though in a political light these agitators are perhaps as bad as anything can well be, I do not think them half so *dangerous* enemies to religion, i.e. to the souls of men, as wicked, worldly-minded Christians are."

He passed his Christmas Vacation, that of 1819—1820, as usual at Fairford, and I have seen many letters which passed between him and the family of the Curate of Fladbury, Mr. Pruen, with whom he had become intimate in the course of his visits to his

Godfather the Rector. These shew with what heartiness he joined in the social meetings of the season, kept up as it should seem very genially in the neighbourhood. As a younger man, and before he was in Holy Orders, no one enjoyed a dance more than he; nor did he think it now at all unbecoming to take his part in those which in truth were of the simplest kind, and scarcely more than family reunions. His religion, then and to the end, was cheerful, as was his natural temperament; and it may be collected from his letters at this period of his life what a favourite he was with young and old, how much his visits were courted, and his friendship valued. I mention the Pruen family as an instance; it consisted of the father and mother, a governess as I collect, and a numerous family, principally girls of different ages, but all apparently at the time I speak of in the school-room, or, as to one or two, just issuing from it. Many letters passed between him and them, full of merriment and fun, queer riddles, familiar poetry, with sometimes graver matters insinuated; I do not publish them, and yet they exhibit in a lively way that side of his character, well known indeed to those who were intimate with him, but of which those who only knew him at a distance, or by his writings, or later in life, can scarcely be aware. Somehow, as life advanced on both sides, and graver interests absorbed him, the intercourse between him and the members of this family appears to have ceased, but

not the kindly feeling. It was when he was at Bournemouth, in the last illness of himself and Mrs. Keble, that one of his former young friends, Margaret Pruen, who had married and I believe become a widow, wrote to him from Torquay; I do not know the subject of her letter, it was probably to inquire about his health, and to remind him of old times and old feelings; I cannot forbear to print the answer which he wrote: the writing is in a very feeble hand, a sad contrast to the firm and distinct character of the letters from which I have hitherto been quoting: it may seem a sad, yet it is a very soothing close to the correspondence:—

"BOURNEMOUTH,
*Jan.* 17, 1866.

"MY DEAR MARGARET,

"For why should I not speak as in the old times which you so kindly remember? you put me to shame by your kind, long letter, long, I mean, in comparison of what I can write; and by your affectionate remembrance of one who has somehow been drawn so far away from you all. It is too good of you, but to me refreshing, to have such a report of your dear sister and the rest who are left you. I thank you for it; and all of you, in sight and out of sight, I thank, for your constant kindness with all my heart, and trust to be remembered by you at this time, especially *then* when we all wish most to be remembered. For my dear wife's long trial of illness seems now to be approaching its end; we came here in October, being obliged to go somewhere, and she feeling herself unequal to the journey further west, and she certainly gains no strength: but thanks be to God, as far as health allows, she is bright and cheerful as ever, and

takes all her old interest in things. I send her kind love with my own. I cannot write more at present; except that I am very sorry to hear of Henry's painful complaint, and not a little ashamed to think of my Godson, and how I have neglected him all this time. I yet hope we may have some communication, although my chance of it, humanly speaking, is fast lessening: however, assure him of my constant remembrance of him. What you say of your dear Anne's gentleness, and loving simple ways, brings her back to me as I could wish, and so does the place about Fladbury churchyard.

"God grant us all, how unworthy soever some of us may now feel ourselves, a happy meeting in the end!

"I am always, my dear friend,

"Affectionately yours,

"J. KEBLE."

"*To Mrs. Billamore,*

"6, *Scarborough-terrace, Torquay.*

It was at the Oxford Commemoration of 1820 that Southey revisited the University; he had at that time effectively overcome the prejudices which political differences, and the clever hostility, miscalled criticism, of the "Edinburgh Review," and it must be confessed some of his own peculiarities, had raised against his literary reputation. His merits as a poet, historian, and essayist, were now fairly appreciated, and the many, who approached him at all nearly, were enthusiastic in the admiration of the purity of his character, and the generous geniality of his nature. I think I have mentioned elsewhere that I had been the means of making him known as a writer

to Keble in the early days of our friendship. I had now the good fortune of being able to make them personally known to each other; Southey was much pleased with Keble: writing to me a few days after upon another matter which interested us all three very deeply, he says shortly: "All that Keble says upon the subject is full of kindness and right feeling, and would make me think more highly of the writer than I did before, if that had been easy." Keble wrote of him, to me and to Dyson, at greater length; his remarks in both are striking, and I will subjoin them here:—

"My dear John Coleridge,

"Many thanks to you for this new and great kindness of making me acquainted with Southey: for I owe it entirely to you. He is indeed a noble and delightful character, and I hope to be the better all my life for what I have seen of him and heard from him. Luckily for me (though I am afraid rather irksomely for him) he has hardly any acquaintance resident in Oxford, having completely out-lived all his old contemporaries, so that I had a good deal of him to myself: and that was indeed delightful. Whatever his notions *may have been*, and however incautiously he may have sometimes expressed himself, I am satisfied his notions are now as nearly correct, meaning by 'correct,' agreeable to my own, both in religion and politics, as almost any of *theirs* whom one most loves and trusts in. The only thing which seems to me wrong in them, is a disposition which I sometimes fancy I observe in him, and which is common to him with three-fourths of the orthodox men in the kingdom, to confound the two together: I mean, to

deal politically with the Church and religion. His reception in the Theatre was most flattering: not one of all the party, except Lord Hill, received anything like the same share of applause. In the evening he had an invitation from the College to dine in Balliol Hall. Reginald Heber, Miller, and Milman were there, and Noel Ellison was delightful: I have never seen four such men together in my life before. Copleston wanted him to dine with him on Thursday, but he was obliged to leave us, to my sorrow, and left a most excellent name behind him, for his kind and unassuming manners, with every one who had been in his company for five minutes."

Writing to Dyson, he says:—

"I had the great delight this last Commemoration of being introduced to the two public characters, whom of all others I should rather wish to know, Southey and Reginald Heber. I liked both exceedingly, but Heber decidedly best: he is so remarkably unaffected in his manner; I watched him all the time they were performing 'Palestine' in the Theatre, and he did not attitudinize in the least, nor seem conscious of being the chief character in the room; and then his style of conversation is so particularly kind and hearty. Southey has a good deal of the same excellencies; but he gives you the idea of a man forbearing to display himself, Heber of one into whose head no such thing ever entered. Nevertheless Southey quite made good his ground in my favour, more completely a good deal than I had expected. He is now an orthodox man, and the faults of his views in ecclesiastical matters are, as far as I could judge from what he said, the faults into which such persons are most apt to fall—making religion too much a matter of politics—and the like."

Personal comparisons are too often made in ignorance or forgetfulness of the differing circumstances under which individuals present themselves for consideration, and I cannot but think that for some such reasons my dear friend, in this, did a little injustice to Robert Southey. Heber was then comparatively a young man, quite at home in Oxford, an Oxonian of the day, in a position perfectly secure, in a place where he was most justly and universally popular, in the scene of all his successes and triumphs, surrounded by the friends of his own day—the only novel circumstance of the hour was, that he was present when his own poem was performed as an Oratorio, in the place where he but a few years before had recited it as a Prize: it would be undervaluing so good and great a man to think there was anything intoxicating in all this, anything to disturb the calmness of a really modest man. Southey was a much older man, an Oxonian of a day long past, who had had to win his position in the world, fighting his way step by step against opposition fair and unfair, through poverty and hardship, in spite of ridicule, obloquy, slander, and neglect—slowly he had gained a great one: and where was he when Keble met him? at Oxford, which had been no scene of success or credit to him as a student, which he had left without a degree in youth, where he found no contemporary friend, where he was now for the first time returning in mature age, to receive all the honour it could bestow—at the suggestion it

should seem of the very party, which had never cheered him in his struggles, nor been over forward to greet him in his success. Did not these circumstances tend to provoke somewhat of self-assertion? did they not moreover irresistibly suggest recollections and thoughts calculated to turn his thoughts inwards, and to raise somewhat disturbing feelings? When I asked myself this question, I naturally turned to his letters; there will be found in the fifth volume of his son's Memoirs of him, two letters, one a playful account of the whole visit written to his three daughters, the other, which follows immediately, to Neville White; they are at pages 38 and 41. There will be seen, by the last, a little of what was passing in his mind at the time. I know that the first, perhaps in general the abiding and not unnatural, impression as to Southey was and is, that he was a vain man; like the great Roman Orator and Philosopher, he was a man of great ability, and remarkable industry, and he knew it; he knew what he could have done, if he had been blessed with more independent means, and he knew the value of what he had actually done; and it is neither wonderful nor unpardonable, if such a man, when critics and wits have been for years sneering at him, and thwarting his efforts, should acquire somewhat of a habit of thinking and saying what, as coming from himself, seem great things of those efforts and their results. One thing let me observe, a more generous soul never existed;

generous of his money when he had it, generous always of his time which was to him money, yet who ever heard him breathe a syllable of self-applause on this?

I must add the short passage, which I spoke of, in the letter to Neville White, and hope to be forgiven for a digression, extorted from me by a sense of justice, not less than by sincere gratitude for much and most valuable kindness shewn to myself when I needed it much.

"My visit to Oxford brought with it feelings of the most opposite kind. After the exhibition in the Theatre, and the collation in Brasenose Hall given by the Vice-Chancellor, I went alone into Christ Church walks, where I had not been for six and twenty years. Of the friends with whom I used to walk there, many (and among them some of the dearest) were in their graves. I was then inexperienced, headstrong, and as full of errors as of youth and hope and ardour. Through the mercy of God, I have retained the whole better part of my nature, and as for the lapse of years, that can never be a mournful consideration to one who hopes to be ready for a better world, whenever his hour may come. God bless you. R. S."

Through life a tour in the country was among Keble's most pleasurable indulgences, and his position at Oriel now making him more at ease in his circumstances, he seems usually to have devoted a part of the Long Vacation to a ramble, often alone, and often making a circuit among his old Oxford intimates retired into the country. Thus I find him in

Worcestershire, and at Lichfield in 1819, in the summer. My manuscript copy of the exquisite stanzas "on a monument in Lichfield Cathedral" is dated July 22, 1819. No one who has read them can doubt that they were suggested by a sight of the monument, and probably commenced on the spot. My copy I may say has but a few verbal differences from the copy which is printed in "Church Poetry," p. 301, but it wants one stanza, so necessary almost to the completeness of the Poem, that I suppose I must have omitted it through carelessness. In return, mine has four stanzas at the close, separated by a few crosses, and with a very slight variation in the metre; these are addressed to himself. The variation is produced by lengthening the fourth line of each stanza, and is not a very happy one; and judgment was shewn in printing the poem without them; at the same time, they are characteristic of the man, and represent, I have no doubt accurately, the humble application to himself, which he would make on such an object before him, and such a train of thought as he had indulged in. It was no less characteristic to keep from the public this application.

In September, 1820, he made a longer tour, and visited Ellison at his living of Whalton in Northumberland, and Davison at his of Washington in the county of Durham; these places he made centres for riding excursions to the objects of interest in the neighbourhood, among them not forgetting Stan-

hope, the residence for many years of Bishop Butler. Then coming south, he visited Dyson at Nunburnholme. His journey homeward he shall tell himself, as he described it in a letter to Dyson from Fairford, of September 11, 1820.

"Perhaps you will like to have some account of my journey. I got safe home—that you know from the date of this—and you know from Penrose that I staid at Fledborough by the way—but you do not know that I waited at Hayton half an hour for the Coach; you do not know that I travelled to York holding a drunken sailor by the button, lest he should tumble off; and you cannot possibly have the least idea of my delight, when I found myself in the Minster at sunset that most gorgeous evening; no, your low mind, debased by immoderate indulgence in Pocklington biscuits and the vulgar smell of sweet-peas, cannot enter into pleasures of so high a kind. In good earnest I reckoned myself particularly fortunate in my view of the Minster: I spent two or three hours there, and could hardly find anything to damp my enjoyment. My coffee house companion was Sir Thomas Bernard's 'Comforts of Old Age,' a very proper book for persons of a certain time of life, and very useful to me; as, though there were abundance of persons in the room, none of them seemed disposed to take much notice of me, and I was too shy (you know my usual amiable diffidence) to make the first advances. The night journey was an interchange of sleeping and grumbling, with a little sickliness now and then, by way of variety, on the part of some of my fellow-travelleresses. So you may believe that I was not sorry when it was light, and I could see the pleasant country to the north of Doncaster, and the town of Doncaster

itself, at the elegance of which I was quite surprised. But it was still pleasanter to enter upon the rich vale of Trent; and pleasantest of all to discern Penrose's face, half-grinning, half-business-like, waiting for me in a gig, at the place and time appointed. Right glad was I to find myself snug under another parsonage roof, and to become acquainted with his family, who seem as well suited to their situation, and it to them, as any group I ever beheld. I cannot conceive how Arnold could have the heart to disturb such a family party by taking one away. I find by a letter which I received yesterday from Penrose, that he has been paying you a flying visit. For this I take some credit to myself, having taken some pains to assure him how glad you would be to have him there. He maintains that yours is a more retired place than Fledborough: but this cannot be, because you know there is a road through Nunburnholme to Warter; whereas you have heard of the finger-post 'to Fledborough and no farther.' Not but that I contrived to get farther; for under Penrose's able steerage I made my way to Lincoln, criticised the in-, and admired the out-side of the Cathedral as busily as I could for two hours. I really think, on the whole I prefer the latter to that at York; but the inside architecture will not bear a comparison; if indeed one can judge fairly of it, now it is so disfigured by yellow wash, and plain glass where painted was evidently intended. I went up to the top of the lantern tower, and was particularly pleased with the view of the city, with its profusion of ruins scattered about it. I like the country for a reason more sentimental than picturesque—namely, that I think it like my own. Having enjoyed myself for exactly a week, I set out on the Friday morning by the mail for London, and got into the Great City just in time to mount a Stroud coach,

which set me down at papa's door about six in the afternoon of Saturday."

In July, 1822, he made a tour of visits, which took in the Millers at Bockleton in Worcestershire, and his old friend, a former curate of Fairford, Mr. Richards, then residing in the neighbourhood of Aberystwith. Writing to Cornish from Malvern, on July 8, which he said he had reached, being on a voyage of discovery, i.e. searching out the nearest way from Fairford to Bockleton, he continues thus:—

"MALVERN,
"*July* 8, 1822.

"I wish you had been with me on the hill just now, and then I should not have gone to sleep in a sort of cave, which they have cut out, looking all over Herefordshire, with a telescope in my hand, reading Spenser. Do you know the 'Shepherd's Calendar?' I think you did not use to know it, for you did not use to quote it, which you certainly would. What a delightful feel it is to sit under the shelter of one of the rocks here, and hear the wind sweeping with that peculiar kind of strong moaning sigh, which it practises on the bent grass. I daresay you have marked it 100 times; but I was never so much struck with it as this evening. And what an air of sanctity the church gives to the place. I pick out spots (luckily the trees and houses are so grouped that there are a good many) where one quite loses every thing smart and townish, and then I quite enjoy it; more I think now than when I was here before. I was not alone, but with Rickards, who was bent on visiting rather than scenery, and in love besides; and when

a man is in love, you know he is a terrible touring companion to all the world, but one."

*To G. J. C.*

I insert this extract not merely for the amusing contrast which it presents between the Malvern of 1822, and the Malvern of 1867, but for the passage about the bent grass, which is reproduced in the beautiful verses on the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity, which Robertson of Brighton liked the best of all in "The Christian Year":—

> ". . . . The fitful sweep
> Of winds across the steep,
> Through wither'd bents—romantic note and clear,
> Meet for a hermit's ear."

In these years there is no doubt that he was gradually composing the work, and these solitary tours (for he seems most often to have wandered alone, leaving his brother to take his place at home) were certainly favourable to such occupation. The dates of such poems of "The Christian Year" as I have in my manuscript books, are in 1819, and in 1822.

In 1821 Keble again accepted the office of Examining Master, and continued to serve until the Easter of 1823 inclusive; but he was sighing for a return to his home and curacy.

"We here at Oxford," says he in a letter in the spring of 1823, "go on much as usual, criticizing sermons, eating

dinners, and laughing at Buckland and Shuttleworth. I feel as if I should be very glad to get away to some country curacy, and yet I distrust my own powers of making good company from myself too; but really a man ought to be able to do so, and one should hope one might never be quite too old to learn that lesson."

Partly I suppose from this feeling he appears to have entertained a notion about this time of accepting a very small living in the gift of the College, Coleby in Lincolnshire. This, however, came to nothing, and the living was ultimately bestowed on his and my friend Trevenen Penrose, who passed the remainder of his life there, protracted to a good old age, in the most exemplary discharge of his duty.

The Tutorship, however, he resigned at the end of Hilary Term in that year, and the death of his mother in May brought his residence in College to a close also; he had gone down to Fairford on Saturday in each week as usual, and each time found her decline more decided. On Saturday, May 10, on his arrival he found her so much worse, that it was clear her end was approaching, and she died very early on Sunday morning.

"I found," says he, writing to me on the 13th, "they were expecting her release every moment: and at 4 o'clock on Sunday morning I may literally say she fell asleep, for never did I see such perfect, such dovelike calmness—not that I was by her at the time. Mary Anne was the only

one of us who had that happiness, for she had had, from extreme weakness, two or three nervous or hysterical spasms in the course of the preceding day, and it was judged better for us to keep at a distance unless she asked for us. I lay down in my clothes thinking she might do so, but she did not; so the last time I spoke to her was last Wednesday. But I thought I never saw anything so like an angel as that dear Mary Anne when she waked me on Sunday morning to tell me that mamma was just gone so sweetly, with hardly a sigh. One is apt to think too much of such things, which are but trifles after all, in comparison of the change to which they lead; but, upon earth, I can hardly conceive a more speaking call for thankfulness than for one's dearest relations to be allowed to glide in such a way, without pain, disturbance, or wandering of mind, just out of sight into Paradise. You will pray for us, my dear friend, and dear Mrs. Coleridge will, too, that we may be something like thankful enough for it: duly thankful we never can be. . . . As they were all so well at Fairford, it was judged best for me to come back and get through my business here."

Writing from Oriel at the same time to Dyson, he says:—

"I meet with so much kindness here, and feel so certain, thank God, of their being comfortable at home, that it is not at all irksome to me, at least not painfully so, as I should have fancied it beforehand if anyone had told me. As far as I can judge, the only real bitterness in parting from dear friends is having to recollect how much one has failed in one's duty to them; but it will not do to talk of that."

I have made these extracts because they are at once characteristic and instructive. Mrs. Keble was the object of the most tender affection to every member of the family, and to no one of it more so than to her son; yet he not only writes thus of his father, sister, and brother, but was himself able to leave home as usual on Monday morning, and go through his work in the Schools, returning only on Saturday to the funeral. The truth is that his faith, and I have no doubt their's, was sincere and practical; I never could find in him, when he lost the dearest objects on earth, any sign of bittter sorrow as without hope; he had no dread of death for the good, he perfectly realized the blessedness of the change for them, and he looked forward cheerfully and humbly to a re-union. It was, too, a part of his practical belief that even now the separation was not absolute; it was not merely in poetry that he expressed, more than once, this cheering thought. It appears again and again in his letters at different periods of his life. Writing of a deceased sister he says,—

"For well I guess, and oft my spright
Holds tearful triumph in the dream,
That when Religion's holy light
Guides me with pure and placid gleam;—

"When I do good, and think aright,
At peace with man, resigned to God,
Thou look'st on me with eye of light,
Tasting new joy in joy's abode.

"But in my dark and evil hour,
When wan despair mine eyelids seals,
When worldly passions round me lower,
And all the man corruption feels;

"Thou turnest not thine eyes below,
Or clouds of glory beam between,
Lest earthly pangs of fear or woe
Upon an angel's brow be seen."

It was thus he answered the difficulty which troubles so many in believing that departed saints retain a perception of the goodness and happiness of those whom they have left behind. I do not mean, of course, that he had shaped this out to his own mind as a certain truth; but I have no doubt that he believed, so as practically to draw consolation from it under bereavement, that the blessed in the intermediate state retained some knowledge of things on earth, some interest in those who survived; believing this, he of course believed that Our Father would have His way, unknown to us, perhaps inconceivable by us, of so regulating that knowledge, that though it might, on the one hand, increase, it should never be allowed, on the other, to abate their blessedness; and what that way might be, he would not even shadow out to himself but dimly, and as it were suggestively or alternately. Speaking in poetry on such a subject he would feel under as much restraint substantially as if he were writing in prose. But I feel

sure that he thought the belief warranted and not unscriptural, used it for himself as consolatory, and did not scruple to recommend it to others. The exquisite poem in the *Lyra Innocentium*, entitled "Bereavement,—Children's Troubles, 8," expounds it very touchingly.

Thus ended his permanent and official residence at Oxford.

## CHAPTER VI.

RETURN TO FAIRFORD, 1823.—SOUTHROP.—PUPILS.—HURRELL FROUDE.—"CHRISTIAN YEAR."

KEBLE had now been one of the Tutors of his College for nearly five years, and had a second time served the office of Public Examiner, as well as that of Master of the Schools once, he might therefore feel justified in ceasing to be a Resident Fellow, returning to his father and two surviving sisters, and resuming the charge of his two little Curacies. His father's health and strength were still remarkable for his great age, but both were liable to sudden changes, and his spirits and sense of duty led him frequently to undertake more personal labour at Coln than was prudent for him. The health, too, of his sisters was a source of very frequent solicitude to him; his letters again and again testify to this. The pleasure of returning to his home was greatly augmented by its combining also the return to a more regular discharge of his professional duties. The amount of these he now added to by accepting the Curacy of Southrop, a small parish very near to Eastleach and Burthorpe, as well as to Fairford. This accumulation of cures, indeed the whole arrangement in regard to them between the two brothers, seems to require some explanation, to

those especially who are familiar only with the more orderly practice of the present day; and this is afforded by the circumstances; their small size and nearness to each other, their slender population. their miserably poor endowments, and their want of attractiveness generally to clergymen. The entire population of the three did not exceed a thousand. Eastleach and Burthorpe churches were within a stone's throw of each other, there was no residence except at Southrop. The undertaking the care of them was indeed a labour of love, the whole receipts exceeded very little £100 a-year, and I have no doubt fell short considerably of what was expended upon them. The district indeed, if I may judge from these cures, and Coln St. Aldwyn's, was one of shamefully scanty endowments; the value of that being only £60 a-year. These circumstances seem to have interested the two brothers, who took to them as charges providentially thrown in their way by their neighbourhood to Fairford; and their father was ready at all times, in their necessary absences, to provide for the calls which might casually arise.

Keble had now bid adieu to public tuition; his pupils at Oriel had testified to their sense of his services by a handsome present of plate, inscribed JOHANNI KEBLE DISCIPULORUM ORIELENSIUM PIETAS MDCCCXXIII.; and I observe in passing as characteristic of the degree to which he shrunk from all exhibition, that intimate as I was with him, I

not only never saw this plate, but I was not even aware of the fact of its having been given to him, until I found it stated in the Memoir to which I have more than once before expressed my obligations. I know not whether such testimonials are now common, but that age was not so demonstrative of affection or gratitude in silver and gold as the present, and at that time, especially after a service of so few years, such a gift was very unusual. It seems to shew how Keble had addressed himself successfully to the hearts as well as the intellects of his pupils. It was a thing to be proud of; he would be sure to think it was undeserved, and therefore perhaps he would say little about it to his friends.

But it would not the less move his affections, and it might be an inducement the more to accept the Curacy of Southrop, where was a good roomy house. To this village several of his pupils followed him occasionally for long visits; some received into the house, some finding lodgings near: among these I may name Robert Wilberforce, Isaac Williams, Hurrell Froude. They were visitors more properly than pupils; at least he would accept no remuneration from them, nor would he allow them to interfere with the discharge of his parochial duties. He called himself an idle lounging man, and he had at all times a desultory, and seemingly irregular way of working; but when these occupations are considered, and also how effectually they were disposed

of, there can be no doubt that his time was well filled up.

Of Hurrell Froude Dr. Newman has written, "He was a pupil of Keble's, formed by him, and in turn re-acting upon him." This sentence is followed by a short and striking account of this extraordinary man, to which it would be unwise in me to attempt any addition, except as it may bear on the object of this memoir. I knew him from a child, and I trace in the somewhat singular composition of his character what he inherited both from his father and his highly gifted mother; his father, whom Keble after his first visit to Dartington Parsonage playfully described to me as "very amiable, but provokingly intelligent, one quite uncomfortable to think of, making one ashamed of going gawking as one is wont to do about the world, without understanding anything one sees;" his mother very beautiful in person, and delicate in constitution, with a highly expressive countenance, and gifted in intellect with the genius and imagination which his father failed in. Like the one he was clever, knowing, quick, and handy; like the other he was sensitive, intellectual, imaginative. He came to Keble full of respect for his character; he was naturally soon won by his affectionateness and simplicity, and in turn he was just the young man in whom Keble would at once take an interest and delight as a pupil; and so in fact it was. I find him

again and again in Keble's letters spoken of in the most loving language, yet often not without some degree of anxiety as to his future course; he saw the elements of danger in him, how liable he might be to take a wrong course, or be misunderstood even when taking a right one; yet his hopes largely prevailed; and especially I remember his rejoicing at his being elected Fellow of Oriel, thinking that the new society and associations, with the responsibilities of college employment, would tend to keep him safe. That Keble acted on him (I would rather use that term, than "formed,") is certain, and even when, in the later years of his short life, symptoms of coming differences in opinion may be traced in his letters, there is no abatement of personal love and reverence, nor indeed, in a certain sense, of his feeling the weight of Keble's influence; and though I gather from these that there was more entire agreement with Dr. Newman as to action, yet it seems to me that there still remained a closer intimacy and more filial feeling with regard to Keble. I may be mistaken in this; it is a conclusion I have come to from reading the letters in that strangely interesting book, "The Remains," and inferring from them the nature of Keble's letters to him, which I very much regret that I have not been able to procure a sight of.

I have not altered this passage, but since the volume was printed and published, a number of these letters have been discovered, (it would seem

by a strange accident,) and placed at my disposal by Mr. William Froude. They fully justify my anticipations as to their value and interest; and so far as I now can, I shall avail myself of his kind permission.

That Hurrell Froude "re-acted on Keble" is true also, I have no doubt, in a certain sense; it could scarcely be otherwise, where there was so much ability and affectionate playfulness, with so much originality on one side, so much humility on the other, and so much love on both. It would be idle to speculate on what might have been, when the hour of trial came, which none of those specially engaged probably then foresaw; before it arrived, Hurrell Froude had sunk under the constitutional malady against which he struggled for four years. What he would have been, and what he would have done, had his life been prolonged, no one can say; it would be unfair to judge him by what he left behind, except as rich grounds of promise. This I believe I may confidently say, that those who knew him best loved him the most dearly, and expected the most from him. This could be more truly said of no one of these than of Keble.

It was while he was thus engaged, that he received, I believe the only, offer that was ever made him of a dignity in the Church. Early in 1824 it was determined to constitute two Dioceses in the West Indies, and William Hart Coleridge, then a

Student of Christ Church, but who had been labouring assiduously as Curate in a large London parish, St. Andrew's, Holborn, was selected to preside over that of Barbados and the Leeward Islands. He had to appoint two Archdeacons, and he pressed Keble to go out with him as Archdeacon of Barbados; the endowment was a liberal one, £2,000 a-year. Keble had a great regard and esteem for the young Bishop whom he had known on friendly terms at Oxford, and who, like himself, had achieved the honour of a Double First Class. He was much gratified by the offer, and, as he says in writing to Dyson, "I might have been dazzled by it;" but about a month before it was made, on his return from Oxford, whither he had gone to preach, he had found his father with his speech considerably affected, and with other symptoms calculated to make his children anxious about him.

"This," he says, in writing to me on March 2, 1824, "as you may suppose, was a strong ingredient in my reasoning with myself on the very kind and too partial offer which W. C. made me. My father was so agitated upon one's pressing the matter in the least, that we all agreed in thinking I could not have done otherwise than I did, without very serious injury to his health in its present state. Under all the circumstances, this left me of course no choice, and I always think that is the greatest comfort, to have one's way plainly marked out. It is to be hoped that the recollection of such a proposal having been made will serve a little to startle one from one's idleness, which I find by

sad experience is likely to be the besetting sin of country parsons; and not the least instance of it is neglect of correspondents and distant friends. But one lives on every day in hopes of mending, and I suppose one must not despair of oneself quite, any more than of one's parishioners."

This would seem at first sight another instance illustrating the cogency on Keble's mind of filial and other domestic obligations; but it is right to shew, from a letter to Dyson, in what light he regarded this particular call. It was not in his opinion a case in which domestic and professional duties came at all into comparison or conflict with each other:—

"Talking of Archdeacons, what do you think? what say you to my going out Archdeacon to Barbados under W. Coleridge: would you advise me to go out, or not? (N.B. I am ripe for asking advice). But do you remember some of the conversations we had on things in general, when we last met at Oxford? I have often thought of them since; indeed I may say the subject of them is hardly ever out of my mind for half an hour together. And in my cogitations on this matter, I thought of them more than usual, because they helped to confirm me in the resolution I knew I must come to. Thinks I to myself, one cannot surely think of a W. Indian Archdeaconry with 2,000 a-year, &c., &c., as a sort of primitive mission to which everything must give way. In short, thinks I to myself, 'tis a mere political thing, and I'm sure Dyson would say the same. Nevertheless, I do not say I should not have been dazzled by it, if my father had not been so decided as he was; not so much by what he said, as by his looks and manner. We were all agreed that it was quite out of the question."

My cousin was influenced, I am sure, in making his offer, both by personal regard, and a sincere desire to select the most fitting person he could find for an appointment of especial importance to him in the settlement of the new Diocese; but I believe every one will now rejoice that Keble declined to accept it. Had he gone to the West Indies, and retained his health, I have no doubt he would have discharged the duties of his office effectively, and wherever he was, he must have been distinguished. "The Christian Year" was so far advanced at this time, that he probably would have completed it; indeed, according to his own theory of poetry, which would have justified its truth in no one more than in himself, he could not but have written it, and we should have had it, I suppose, with a large infusion of tropical lights and imagery, very striking and interesting. He would have finished it slowly however, and very probably, being in some sort removed from the influences of his home advisers, he would have left it unpublished at his death, according to his original intention. But at a distance from European influences and friendships, from the University, and the succeeding agitations of the Church in England, he could not have filled the useful and important place to which he was now advancing; and some of his works, such for example as the *Prælectiones*, and the edition of Hooker, we should certainly have lost. Considera-

tions of this kind of course did not occur to his mind, nor influence his determination ; apart from all these, however, it was one fully justified.

It was early in the following year (1825) that Keble's letters shew him beginning to contemplate seriously the publication of "The Christian Year"—silently, or only with communications to his home circle and some very few others, poem had been added to poem ; but his notion did not as yet go beyond a posthumous publication at most, when he had given the work as much perfection as he should be capable of giving it. I think at that time he would have shrunk a good deal from publishing anything—there was not, it may be remembered, the same proneness "to rush into print" which characterizes the present time—but with regard to poems of a religious character, and which affected the Church, he would, of course, feel a greater scruple about publication. Happily all his friends were against him—yielding by inches, and delaying, even when the resolution was taken, to accomplish it, the step was however ultimately accomplished. In regard to such a work, even these preliminary stages it may be interesting to observe.

March 5, 1825, he writes to me from Fairford :—

"Now they are all gone to bed, I will tell you a secret ; which is that after all my backwardness (which I suppose was chiefly affectation) on such subjects, I am in a fair way to commence *author*—'only think,' as Ellison says—Mr. Jeremiah Dyson, whose opinion on such a matter I take to

be as safe as anybody's can be, strongly recommends me to publish some of the hymns you wot of. It is against my original plan, which was to complete the series if I could, go on improving it all my life, and leave it to come out, if judged useful, when I shall be fairly out of the way; and this is still my favourite plan—only I am afraid I am in a way of being persuaded out of it. Do give me your considerate, and *not partial* opinion, which way would answer best—for indeed the matter is too serious to bandy compliments upon—that is to say, if it is worth thinking of at all."

As to this notion of posthumous publication, I do not remember that he ever mentioned, or was in any way influenced by the circumstance, that George Herbert had formed the same resolution, and acted upon it, in regard to the publication of the "Temple." It is certainly at least a curious coincidence, that in respect of two Poets, and two works so often compared together, and so standing apart by themselves, as it were, in our literature, the same unusual resolution should have been formed. Keble would never have thought of placing himself in comparison with Herbert, of whose poems he was a great admirer: yet he could hardly have been ignorant of the fact, and he might have been moved, even unconsciously, to follow the example of so holy a man.

To Dyson he writes on the 1st of April, 1825:—

"I am very much obliged to you for your kind intentions with regard to the MS. I shall certainly pump you for more criticism, whether anything come of the printing

scheme or no. The more I think of it, the more my fancy would lead me to wait till it might be posthumous. But I must see what Johnny Davison says—I have sent him most of them—leaving out some which I think paltry, and others, which come, as it were, too near home for me to like to shew them much—some also on account of their going rather more than might be approved of upon that notion of decay in the Church, which you know I have for some time entertained. It seemed to me that this had better be established in prose first; without something of that sort, the hymns of which I speak would be hardly intelligible to most readers."

To me he wrote in July :—

"With regard to my other little literary project I have adjourned it nominally till February—but I am in hopes I shall have quite persuaded my persuaders to let it stand over *sine die*, by the time February comes."

Writing to Cornish, in August of the same year, from Southrop, he says :—

"Thank you fifty times for your nice little hint about keeping back my MSS. for a good long while. I am quite sure you are right; and now there is less occasion to be in a hurry, as Tucker says the Scotch Book, which had pirated one of them, is come to another edition in which it's left out."

Cornish, I have no doubt, thought there was still much to do in the way of correction, both as to clearness of expression and smoothness in the measures, and this agreed entirely with Keble's own

opinion; and although he went on with his preparations, the advice remained impressed upon his mind:—

"I am just now," says he in September of the same year, writing from Fladbury to Dyson, "making up another packet of hymns for Davison's revisal: and am coming to a sound and judicious resolution against publishing, for a good while yet at least."

What was Mr. Davison's advice, I have not the means of ascertaining precisely; from the general constitution of his mind I should expect that although his criticism in detail would be minute and severe, and his advice in favour of great deliberation, yet he would look through all questions of detail to the substantial merits, and the great importance of the work in a religious point of view; and therefore be against long delay. It is clear, I think, that with Keble left alone, a degree of caution which we may now safely pronounce exaggerated would have prevailed; this would have been dictated by his humility, which underrated the merit of everything he did, and perhaps, even in this instance, more by his sense of the responsibility of a work, which sought to influence in some sort the religious belief and practice of his readers.

On the 26th of September in the same year he writes about "the verses" to Froude; and I the rather print what follows, because I notice in it the

first indication of the theory of Poetry, which he laid down formally afterwards in his *Prælectiones.*

"LENHAM, NEAR MAIDSTONE,
"26 *Sept*r., 1825.

"MY DEAR FELLOW,

"As Tyler begins, when he is in a jolly mood, these are to thank you very much for the trouble you have taken about them there things of mine, and still more for your telling me exactly what you think about them; for wch I shall hold you in greater honour as long as I live. For to say the truth, I look upon thorough honesty in this kind to be a rare thing in critic-land. I am not so partial to my own crockery, as not to be myself aware of the want of poetical depth, and fervour, wch disqualifies many or most of them from being of much use to imaginative people; but if they only serve as helps to the memory of plain, good sort of people, that is in my mind use enough; provided they do no harm by being untrue or *obtrusive*, of wch last I am a little afraid. At any rate I mean to take plenty of time, to make out the ecclesiastical year, if I can, before I publish; and I feel as if this would take up my life. It would be a great delight to do something, wch might be of use to the sort of persons you mention: but that must be left for some one who *can* do it—and probably whenever it is done, it will be done by somebody who never thought of it himself, but merely wrote to relieve his own mind. Indeed, that was the original purpose of what you have seen, and so far it has proved very useful; but there is no making a silk purse out of a sow's ear—a foolish figure, but farewell that.

"I am here on a week's visit to Tucker, before I enter on my new cure at Hursley."

There is a passage in a letter to Mr. Pruen, which, though written after the publication of the book, suggests an additional reason for the previous delay, and I feel sure this had operated strongly in Keble's mind; a reason which I also believe caused in him all through life a feeling of sadness and dissatisfaction in regard to the book, increased rather than diminished by its popularity. I will insert the passage here, as it is necessary to complete the account of the motives which made him averse to publication, but some remarks which it suggests will find a more proper place hereafter.

"I had long ago considered about printing 'the Dedication' you speak of: but somehow or other (though Davison recommended it) I could not bring myself to it; it seemed too much like printing one's own private confessions: and so to be sure is half the book; and many times, when I consider what my friends would think of me if I were to print the other nine-tenths of my thoughts, I really feel quite ashamed of having printed the book at all: for though I am not blind enough to see all the good in it that you do, I am well aware there is quite good enough to make it on the whole a considerable fib on my part. But this will not do to talk and laugh about."

Keble's attention was, however, now much engaged upon a step which has always seemed to me most important in respect to himself, namely, the quitting the retirement of Fairford and his little Gloucestershire Cures, and coming more into the sunshine as

the Curate of Hursley, with the sole charge of that parish.

Hursley is a Vicarage united to the Rectory of Otterbourne, and the Incumbent at the time I am speaking of was Archdeacon Heathcote, uncle to Keble's old pupil, Sir William Heathcote; he resided at Winchester, there being at that time no residence either in the Rectory or the Vicarage; he took charge himself of the former, and had a Curate for the latter; this curacy became vacant, and on Sir William's recommendation it was offered to Keble, and accepted by him in the spring of 1825, to be entered on at Michaelmas. In the mean time Sir William had found an unfinished house, which stood between the Church and his own Park gates, which he set himself to work to finish, and Keble, with the full consent of his father and sisters, made his arrangements for the change. The house would not be finished, probably, when Michaelmas came, but Keble was to take up his abode temporarily with Sir William at his mansion.

This was among the first acts of Sir William on succeeding to the property, and it is one on which I may venture to say he has reason especially to congratulate himself, both in itself, and in the train of consequences which flowed from it. Some of these probably were contemplated by no one; and perhaps at the moment little more was in his mind than the giving pleasure to Keble, while he procured for the parish in which he resided so good

and able a minister, and for himself the close neighbourhood of so dear a friend, and so wise an adviser. Yet I think it must have been obvious to him that the time had arrived when it was fitting that Keble, who had renounced the academical course, and was so singularly averse to any ambitious speculations, should be called on to labour in a larger field, and exercise his personal influence more widely than it was open for him to do at Fairford. Perhaps no place, and no circumstances, could be more favourable than Hursley, and those which attended the change when it was made. Keble, indeed, would have said, and in strictness truly said, that no sphere was so narrow, but that a good man's energies might be fully and worthily exercised in the ministry there; and he would have repelled the notion that he had gifts which ought to be developed and displayed in the charge of a more varied, and more educated population than that of his Gloucestershire villages. Still there are to be desired in this as in other things, where it can be had, a fitness and proportion between the clergyman and his cure. Qualifications may be in danger of slumbering useless in one place, which find full scope and motive for development and exercise in another.

But independently of this higher consideration, there were pleasure and usefulness in what was to be around him at Hursley, of a kind which did not exist at Fairford; the vicinity of Winchester Cathe-

dral, the College, and School: Robert Barter was not then indeed the Warden of the one, nor Dr. Moberly Head Master of the other, with both of whom he was afterwards to be on the most friendly terms. The society of Hursley itself, however, and its neighbourhood, and especially that which would, of course, gather from time to time at Hursley Park; the renewal of his familiar intercourse with his favourite old pupil; the character of the country around him, dry and healthy, a pleasant interchange of breezy down and picturesque woodland, hill and valley, the New Forest, Southampton, and the sea at a convenient distance; these are some of the circumstances to which I allude.

Keble was not insensible to these attractions, still it was a call on him which might seem to break in upon the discharge of what he had always considered among the first, if not the very first, of his duties, and he naturally hesitated to accept the offer.

I cannot do better than insert here the two letters, addressed to Sir William Heathcote, in the first of which he expresses his doubts, and in the second his acceptance of the offer; the kindness of spirit in which that had been conceived and made may be inferred from the answers:—

"SOUTHROP,
"*March* 14, 1825.

"MY DEAR AND KIND FRIEND,

"I am afraid you will think me very childish after so

many days' consideration of your too kind offer, to be still asking for more time, and yet so it is. I feel very strongly the value and the blessing of such a place as you offer me in your esteem and confidence; although I cannot help shrinking from the increased responsibility which such a change in my station would impose upon me; and then to leave my father and sisters, even for the distance of one long day's journey, is a step not to be resolved upon without a good deal of rather intense consideration, under our circumstances; the circumstances, I mean, of my father's age, and my eldest sister's health. If it were not for this, I believe I should without further delay have closed with your proposal, the friendliness and *piety* of which I do indeed most deeply feel; and whatever be the issue, shall always be most thankful to have received such a letter. Yet I feel so many doubts as to my own fitness for a charge in many respects different from my present one, that I am satisfied it is best for me to have such a family difficulty as this to hinder me from deciding too suddenly. Could you, then, and could the Archdeacon, (to whom please to offer my very sincere acknowledgments,) allow me without inconvenience a week or ten days more, from the time you receive this? In the course of that time, I think I shall be able to satisfy my mind more thoroughly than I can just now, as to what I ought to do. Do not think me cold and ungrateful, for indeed I am not so, though much weaker and less resolute in my duty than I fear you imagine me. And if you had rather have my answer sooner, pray do not scruple to tell me so. My best regards, if you please, to your Mother and Aunt, and Mr. Lovell, and believe me,

"Your very grateful and aff^te^ Friend,

"JOHN KEBLE, JUN^r^."

"FAIRFORD,
"*March* 29, 1825.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,

"Having considered everything well over 'one, two, tree time,' and having examined, and cross-examined, individually and collectively, the several members of this my Privy Council, I need not keep you, or the rest of my kind friends at Hursley and Winchester any longer in suspense. I thankfully accept your kind offer, and only hope that I may not prove unworthy of it. What I propose is, if you can conveniently receive me, to give up Southrop to my brother about the latter end of August, or beginning of September, and then undertake Hursley immediately. By that time the house might, I should think, be floored, plastered, white-washed, painted, and I should think papered; so that the main operations left would be to lay out the garden, and lay in the furniture, both of which I could superintend at my leisure. And there is this advantage in coming while things are still rather unfinished; that if upon trial I should find myself more homesick than I expect to be, it would be less of an undertaking to transport myself home again; or suppose my father or eldest sister, when it comes to the point, should find it more essential to their comfort to have me with them, than it now seems, as there is no answering for the wishes of invalids, or in many other supposable cases, it may turn out a great convenience to be a little unsettled at first. But I will not anticipate anything to disturb so comfortable an arrangement as we all think it. My chief care now must be to endeavour, by God's blessing, that you may never have occasion to repent of your confidence in me. My father and sisters give me good hopes of paying me long and frequent visits, but I must endeavour not to build much on that. I know my best

and wisest way will be to make my parish, wherever I am called, as entirely my home as possible, and to take all one sees of friends and relations as something τοσὸν καὶ ἐτί. I have been a little spoiled in this respect by the privilege of staying with my first and best friends so long; but I trust I am not too old to mend. At all events, I should like to make the trial." . . . .

Upon this footing the arrangement was made; I may seem to have been very diffuse on a matter commonly so ordinary as the acceptance of a Curacy; but it is obvious from the letters I have just inserted, that Sir William's offer was not an ordinary one, nor couched in ordinary language; and I have already stated my reasons for thinking that the change which this move made in Keble's habits of life, in the society in which he moved, and in the exercise of his professional duties, was most important; it was very happily timed too, and the acceptance met with the hearty concurrence of the Privy Council to which the letters refer. His father, indeed, was sure to consider the question with good sense, and entire freedom from selfish bias, and the conclusion was certain.

This resolution put an end, I believe, to Keble's any longer acting as Tutor to any one; and it prevented his accepting one pupil, then a lad between Harrow and Oxford, whom at the request of his father I had earnestly pressed on him to take charge of—Arthur Acland. I can hardly conceive one who

would have been more congenial to him. But it could not then be arranged; however, this did not prevent the formation of a friendship between them in after life, and it was pleasant to me to know on good information, that under the great affliction of his life, which indeed did not very long precede his own death, Arthur Troyte, as he had become, sought the vicarage at Hursley, and found substantial consolation in the sympathy which Keble manifested, and the advice he gave.

## CHAPTER VII.

HURSLEY CURACY.—DEATH OF MARY ANN KEBLE.—RETURN TO FAIRFORD.—1825—1826.

IN the lives of most men there is a period which one would characterize, if not as the most happy, yet the brightest, and most sunshiny; when their hopes are most cheerful, their cares lightest, their sense of enjoyment most lively. The year which Keble passed as Curate of Hursley I should characterize as that period in his life; it was scarcely a year, before he was re-called to Fairford by an event which, with all his habitual resignation, was yet one of the most afflicting trials he had ever been submitted to. But of this by-and-by.

It had been arranged, as I have intimated, that Thomas Keble should take to the Curacies, and to the Parsonage at Southrop, on his leaving it. This was the more agreeable, as he had not long before, to the entire satisfaction of the family, and not least to that of Keble, married a lady, whose sister afterwards became Keble's own wife. Before Keble settled at Hursley, he visited two or three of his old friends, and took Ellison's duty at Huntspill for a week or two, and on the first Sunday of October, 1825, commenced the discharge of his duties as Curate.

Writing to me not long before he started from home, he says :—

"You would laugh if you could look into me, and read all the pretty schemes of reform which course one another over my still childish brain. I am to be *so* regular, *so* industrious, *so* punctual, *such* an early riser, &c., &c., &c., and all to be learned, or rather picked up on Salisbury Plain, in the space of sixty-five miles from this home to my new one."

On the day of what he called "reading himself in to his new diocese," he wrote to me in high spirits; he had found his house unfinished, and was residing with Sir William at Hursley Park; this, too, might be called the bright period of Sir William's life; he had not long entered on his career; his marriage was in prospect before him, and his election as Knight of the Shire. Keble writes in the fulness of his heart, how "very very friendly" he was to him, and how "much more comfortable and more at home he was than he ever thought he should be so soon, un-Fairfordized as he was." He likes his village, his home, his church tower, (I note his expressive silence as to his church,) and he sums up a string of likings, with the remark, that "here is a good store to set against the uncomfortable circumstances which are sure to come by-and-by." His accounts from home, too, were bright:—

"Elizabeth's headaches are mending, and my Father is as brisk as a bee; he has not flagged a moment about my

departure, and when he keeps up himself, he keeps us all up with him."

He had come into the parish with the best of recommendations, and was most kindly received; he soon made his own way good, both socially and as the pastor of the flock; hints disclosing his industry in this last respect appear from time to time in his correspondence. Beside these, there was the Parsonage to be finished, and the garden, an especial object of interest, and the pleasure-ground, to be laid out and planted; the first of these lies between the house and churchyard on the side of the house which faces the tower and west end of the Church, the latter slopes away very prettily from the back front, and is flanked on the west by the Park pales, and some fine old elms. The house itself is rather picturesque than handsome, not commonplace, not too large, yet sufficiently commodious.

Keble's old friends were not slow to visit him in his new abode; and this was one of his greatest pleasures; among them very early was Arnold. He says :—

"I have tried the cozie powers of the Hursley air not only with Mary Anne, who has paid me a visit of five weeks ending the 9th Jan$^{y}$., but also with Tom Arnold, who ran down here like a good neighbour, and surveyed the premises and the neighbourhood presently after Christmas. How very unaltered he is, and how very comfortable

and contented; he is one of the persons whom it does one good to think of when I am in a grumbling vein."

Arnold was at this time residing with pupils at Laleham, with the spirits and hopefulness of boyhood, or youth, and the activity and brightness of early manhood; and, as Keble says, quite unaltered in manner from what we had known him at Oxford. He had brought with him the opening of an Essay on Schools and Universities, intended for a Review. Keble says "the covering of the jar is so very sweet and luscious, that I suspect there must be something terribly bitter below; but he only cackles and crows at anything anybody can say to him." Few survive who can remember how to the life this paints him in his merry defiant moods in his younger days. I may add that he had sent me in a letter an analysis of what he intended to say; it is so full, and able, that I cannot but wish it had been selected for publication in his Life.

Tucker, John Awdry, and Charles Plumer, the two latter at that time brother Fellows with him of Oriel, also came to him; it was scarcely a deviation for me when on my Circuit, in passing from Winchester to Salisbury, to go by Hursley, and I visited him in this way both in the spring and summer. Upon the latter occasion I was taking my two elder boys into Devonshire, and they were received by him during the Winchester Assizes. At

the end of these I went there and took them on with me. I found him with his father and two sisters in high spirits, and all four had concurred in making the little ones happy; they on their part had not been slow in becoming familiar with Keble, and accepting him as their playmate; and so their fondness for him commenced, which, combined with the profoundest respect as years advanced, continued unabated to his death. Love for children, a full understanding of their natures, and the power of entering into all their ways and wishes, and interpreting their thoughts, were properties he possessed even then in a very high degree.

I have said I found his father and sisters with him; this was a realization of the expectations held out to him before he left Fairford. Mary Anne, as has been stated, had fulfilled a promise she had made for herself, on which he counted much, and had stayed for five weeks with him in the preceding December and January. When I had proposed sending my young ones to him, I had supposed him alone, and should hardly have thought of sending him such intruders, if I had known who were with him; but Mr. Keble and the sisters both concurred in wishing them to come. In announcing this to me, he says:—

"You may imagine the pleasure it is to have my Father and Sisters here; my Father so remarkably well, and so beautifully cheerful; he enjoys the place much more than

I had expected, and will not allow that he sleeps at all the worse for being out of his own bed. Elizabeth was rather knocked up with the journey, not at first, but after a day or two; however, now she is looking up again, and enjoys our woodland drives mightily. In short, they all seem as natural almost as at Fairford; and the place being left in dishabille longer than it ought, is no great disadvantage, for it will have all the benefit of their suggestions; and I don't despair of its being quite a show parsonage by the time Johnny's eldest grandson goes his first Circuit. You will come the end of next week, and give us the benefit of your advice, there's a good fellow."

He little thought in how short a time comparatively, and in how different a sense, he would make the vicarage a show parsonage.

He and I were to dine with Sir William, and after we had set the home party down to their earlier dinner, we took a long walk in the Park, and, I remember, explored the remains of the old Merdon Castle, which stands in it. Such pleasures were now of rare occurrence to me, and the walk lives in my memory.

I dwell on this passage in Keble's life with minuteness, and with the more interest, at least to myself, from the sad close of it which so soon followed. The family visit terminated, Mr. Keble and the two sisters returned to Fairford. In a letter which I have seen, written some years before to Mrs. Pruen, in which he spoke of intending to introduce a young lady to her, he says, "not my wife Elizabeth, but

my sweetheart Mary Anne." These words very happily and truly describe the shadow of difference in his feeling towards the two sisters; both have long passed away, and I may speak of them without reserve; while they were so identified with Keble, that those who read about him ought to know something of them. Elizabeth, the elder by several years, was almost a constant invalide; her complaint had rendered an operation necessary, which made her lame, and she was seldom free from suffering. Her cheerful patience, her unselfishness, her strong good sense, her sweetness, and her piety, mixed up a large portion of reverence for her with the love which he bore towards her. Nor was this without reason; in my note made at the time of this visit, and which I print because it was made at the time, and only for my own eyes, I see I say of her, "Miss Keble was with him, looking very delicate; she had evidently suffered much from the hot weather, and looked less pretty than she used, but there is an almost angelic sweetness about her manner, and expression of countenance." Mary Anne was younger; though not strong, yet having better health, and brighter spirits, smarter in speech, and more light-hearted, entering into all his drolleries, and answering them, walking with him, riding with him; he constantly sporting with her, seldom addressing her but by some fond diminutive nick-name; and in his letters to her constantly sliding into odd rhymes, or

droll puns; yet with all this he had the fullest sense of the sterling qualities of head and heart, which she possessed. It would have been, I suppose, impossible to say which he loved most tenderly, "the wife, or the sweetheart."

It was the unexpected death of this dear sister which he communicated to me in the following letter:—

"FAIRFORD,
"*Sept.* 25, 1826.

"MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

"I cannot help hoping you may in some way or other be a little prepared for what I have to communicate—a most trying visitation of God's Providence, particularly to my father and Elizabeth,—yet accompanied, as always, with many, very many circumstances of great comfort and relief. I was summoned from Hursley the morning Henry Coleridge left me, by an account of dearest Mary Anne's being alarmingly ill; when I came here, I found she had been in a state of delirium ever since Sunday night; and this continued, with very slight abatement, till last Wednesday morning about two o'clock, when she was quiet for about two hours, and then, seemingly without pain, fell into her last sleep, fairly worn down by the violence of the attack. Dear soul, I really do not think it at all presumptuous to rejoice in the contemplation of her present state. Sudden as her death was to herself, she was, I firmly believe, entirely prepared for it. Her spirits had been rather affected of late, and she sometimes appeared to anticipate something; but the only effect this had on her was to make her more cheerful and resigned in everything, and kinder to everybody. The more coolly I think of her, now

the first shock is over, the more does this comfort grow upon me; and if it were not for my father and Elizabeth, I think I should feel an unmixed though melancholy pleasure in thinking of her. To them, as you may well conceive, the separation is painfully trying: humanly speaking, irreparable; but the Almighty has mercies in store which we know not of, and they are both so calm and patient,—my Father even cheerful,—that I cannot, upon consideration, be uncomfortable about them either. My brother and Bessie are with us, and are the greatest support to one another, and to us; and the baby is like a little angel sent among us to shine in an overclouded place. Then we have our Bibles and Prayer-books at hand, and are sure of the affectionate sympathy of many dear friends, you my dear Coleridge particularly; never shall we forget the very brotherly letter you sent us the last time we were in distress, when we had just parted from my mother. I was very glad of your letter by Henry, and of the cheering account he brought of your family; the blessing of God be upon them all. Remember us in your prayers,—me particularly, that I may make a better use of this than I have done of other visitations. And when you write to Ottery, will you let Frank and Henry know how things are, with my kindest regards. I promised to write, but perhaps he will excuse that at present.

"Your very affectionate Friend,

"JOHN KEBLE, JUN^r."

He wrote about the same time on the same occasion to Froude, and even had the letter been confined to this, it is so exquisite in thought and expression, that I could not have withheld it from

my readers; but they will see that it has a character of its own; tenderly, and delicately, and very wisely, the former tutor suggests to the pupil, now become the young friend, how to deal with infirmities in temper, or spirits, to which he thought him constitutionally liable. I therefore give the whole letter, and for the same reason I subjoin an extract from another written later in the same year:—

"I am now in the midst of preparations to quit Hursley, and return to live at Fairford as early as I can next week; I therefore am afraid I shall not be able to write much to the purpose, but something I must write in answer to yours, which was forwarded from home with a very comfortable account of matters there, and reached me this morning. I knew you would be very sorry when you heard of what has come upon us, and I feel that I can write freely to you about it; but I cannot half describe to you the depth and intensity, at least as it seemed to me, of my thoughts and feelings during Mary Anne's illness and for some time since. Certainly no loss could be so great, humanly speaking, to Elisabeth and my Father; but they are both such sort of people, that I have long been used to consider everything that happens to them as a certain good: and there was nothing bitter in my grief as far as they were concerned; much less in thinking of Mary Anne herself; but the real bitterness was when I thought of many things in which I have been far less kind to her than I ought to have been. Somehow or other I have for years been accustomed to talk to her far more freely than to anybody else in the world, though of course there were two or three whom

I loved quite as well. But it has so happened that whenever I was moody or fretful, she has had to bear with me more than any one, and if I chose I could sit down and torment myself by the hour with the thought of it. This is the only feeling of real bitterness that I have on the subject, but I know it is wrong to indulge it, and I trust soon to get over it entirely; indeed, I seem to have done so already, only I feel one cannot in any way depend upon one's self. I am certain no person who believes in the Atonement ought to indulge in bitter remorse, and therefore, by God's blessing, I don't mean to be uncomfortable if I can help it, even in the thought of my past faults. I have been so too much already, and it only seems to make one lazy and weaken one's own hands and one's friends'. If you please, therefore, don't let us encourage one another in melancholy any more; but let us always resolutely look to the bright side of things, and among other helps to be quiet, let us always talk as freely to one another as we do now; for nothing relieves one so much as making a clean breast. I never was so much impressed with the value and excellency of cheerfulness as a Christian virtue as I have been since M. A.'s death. The remembrance of her peculiar cheerfulness (for she had more of it than any of us, except, perhaps, my Father) goes so far towards keeping us all up, especially Elisabeth. We keep thinking how vexed she would be to see us annoying ourselves about her; and how she always wanted everybody to live in sunshine; and it quite makes us ashamed and afraid to feel desolate. You may easily imagine what a support this is to Elisabeth, whose thoughts, both from her temper and circumstances, are more entirely fixed on M. A. than either of ours can be. Of course, she must feel like a widow, but I trust not as a desolate one: certainly

she seems alive to every comfort, and her prevalent feeling is one of deep thankfulness for the assurance of M. A.'s happiness. As to my Father, he really seems to have recovered his ordinary cheerfulness: now and then he is overcome, but tears relieve him, and he goes on comfortably again. I am going to be his curate at Coln, where I hope we shall yet have many a comfortable discourse, and not find it necessary to ramble so far as the Wye in search of 'great rocks' to shelter us. I don't mean that I am to live at Coln, but at Fairford. Betty goes to Coln. I like your plans of reading, but don't be disheartened if you seem to do little; only I would not indulge reveries. As you speak of good books, do look at the Life of Mr. Bonnell if it comes in your way. It is in the list of the Christian Knowledge Society, and Hawkins I know can lend it you. See p. 153. There is a passage which I have found useful, and I suspect you may too. You cannot think how often you come into my mind, especially now I am endeavouring to train myself to a more thorough content and cheerfulness than I have ever yet practised. For I fancy that you and I require in some respects the same sort of training. At any rate I know too well what passes in my own mind, to think anything contemptible in you. Now I think this is enough about ourselves, for I hold it to be a selfish and dangerous sort of thing for people to be always turning their eyes inward. But don't let this hinder you from writing always as freely of what is uppermost as you do now; only please not to let your own faults, nor anything uncomfortable, be often uppermost. As I said before, I am sure it is not natural it should be so in those for whom Christ died.

"This lesson I have learned of dear Mary Anne, and I hope not to forget it, but to have it perfect by the time

I see her again, and if I can get you to learn it too, so much the better for us all. She often used to speak of you, and I dare say to pray for you, for she fancied you not quite comfortable, and she had a great feeling for that sort of discomfort.

"God bless you now, my dear friend. Let me hear from you as often as it seems to do you any good—and don't mind what you write. Mention how your sister is—I have heard nothing of her for a long time. Ever and ever yours, J. K., Jun^r."

"2^d. *Dec^r.*, 1826.

"So much for myself, and now you. I am bound to thank you over and over again for your last letter, it was and is a real comfort to me, for I am tolerably sure you are in the right way, only don't dwell too much upon whatever may have been wrong; to some minds it may be necessary, but not to those who are in danger of becoming indolent by too much thinking about themselves. And when you find yourself, as I daresay you sometimes do, overpowered as it were by melancholy, the best way is to go out, and do something kind to somebody or other. Objects, either rich or poor, will generally present themselves in the hour of need to those who look for them in earnest, although Oxford is not perhaps the most convenient place to find them in. However, there they surely are, if you will take the trouble of looking for them; and perhaps that very trouble is in some sort an advantage in driving away a moody fit, although I always reckon it a great privilege of a country Parson, that his resources in this way lie close to his own door. Writing, too, I have known in many cases a very great relief; but I almost doubt the expediency of preserving journals, at least of

looking much back upon them: if one could summon resolution to do so, I fancy the best way would be to write on till one was a little unburthened, and then put one's confessions in the fire. But in all these things, of course, no one can judge for his neighbour. And whatever you do, don't throw your confessions *to me* in the fire, for it does my heart good to receive them; it makes me hope that I am sometimes *useful*, which is a sensation I don't very often experience."

It was in the spring of 1827, (March 5 is the date it bore,) that Keble wrote the poem entitled "Burial of the Dead," which is printed, No. 50, in the *Lyra Apostolica.* I hardly know whether I should not assign it the first place in all the poetry he has left behind him, for its beautiful rhythm, and most appropriate measure, the finish of its language, but above all these, for its richness, simplicity, and pathos. Its charm is increased by knowing that it was Mary Anne's funeral which it dwells on; this gives a reality and tenderness to such expressions as "cheering whispers like thine own." Here, too, we find what again and again, indeed almost uniformly, is to be found, when he wrote in verse or prose on such subjects, the expression of his belief in the communion of the departed spirits of the blest with the sorrowing survivors :—

"The deep knell dying down, the mourners pause,
Waiting their Saviour's welcome at the gate:
Sure with the words of heaven
Thy spirit met us there,

"And sought with us along th' accustom'd way
The hallow'd porch, and entering in beheld
The pageant of sad joy
So dear to Faith and Hope."

I can hardly suggest why he wrote "brother" for "sister" in the stanza towards the close, perhaps it might be consideration for those who would first see the poem, whom he would not touch too closely, or it might be from his habitual shrinking from putting himself, or his own special sorrow before the public eye, that he would generalize this most touching incident in the poem. I mention the circumstance, however, as it might raise a doubt as to the occasion of the poem, for which there is no foundation.

The poem immediately preceding in the same volume is by Keble also, both bear the title of Bereavement; judging only from internal evidence, I should say this was also occasioned by the same affliction; it is most touching, but the strain of thought which makes it so interesting to those who know, or are studying Keble's nature, removes it from the province of criticism.

This event, as might be expected, recalled Keble from Hursley; he could no longer separate himself from his father and only surviving sister, and though he would have preferred, I think, their joining him at Hursley, yet he found this impossible.

"Many persons (he wrote to me) in my Father's place

would rather perhaps have moved to me, but with his turn of mind it is quite out of the question. I really think if he *had* brought himself to it, it would most likely shorten his life."

Circumstances prevented his brother, now a family man, from coming to reside at Fairford; indeed, could that have been arranged, it would scarcely, I think, have satisfied Keble's loving heart. So he made a short visit to superintend the removal of his books and other matters to Fairford, and as Hursley, fortunately, could be provided for without much inconvenience, before the end of October he was again settled under his father's roof, and thus sadly and unexpectedly ended this pleasant episode in his life, his charge of Hursley as Curate.

# CHAPTER VIII.

## RETURN TO FAIRFORD.—PUBLICATION OF THE "CHRISTIAN YEAR."—1826, 1827.

KEBLE returned to a home sadly changed by the death of his sister. I do not think that in the course of his life he sustained any loss which he felt more acutely; beyond the privation to himself in the death of a sister so loved, a companion at once so bright and lively, so sensible and good, he could not but be affected by the blow to his father, and even more his invalide and suffering sister, now left alone. Dyson, who visited at Fairford more often than I did, and knew Mary Anne more familiarly, wrote to me at the time, and I transcribe a part of his letter, as in a few words he does her so much more justice than I have been able to do in many:—

"Oh, Coleridge, what a sad blow to her family, the loss of Mary Anne Keble; poor I must not call her after the common usage, since she has so infinitely the advantage of all left behind. John Keble sent me word of her loss soon after it happened, and gave, as far as could be given so early after the blow, a comfortable account of his father and sister; and to be sure, if the truest piety, and most practical submission can give any comfort under such a loss, they will have it, and I dare to say, will perhaps at first feel it less, than their immediate friends will for them.

But when I think what a loveable being she was in herself, what an affectionate, gentle, guileless, and truly simple heart she had, and how little the cares and affection of the best and tenderest men can supply the unwearying, assiduous, self-denying, attachment of a daughter and sister, I must be apprehensive of the effect upon her father and Elizabeth from such a loss, a loss to be perceived not in one stunning blow, and all is over, but to be felt daily and hourly; I hope, however, and I pray for the best for them."

This was written early in October, 1826. The letters which both Dyson and I received in the following months shew that any apprehension of permanent depression of spirits would have been groundless; all three of the survivors were strong in their common faith, and the picture which Keble draws of his aged father and sister, and unconsciously of himself, under this visitation is most cheering and instructive.

He says to Dyson early in November:—

"Amongst all the friendly letters we received, your's seemed one of the most valuable, because you both of you understood dearest Mary Anne so well, and loved her so truly. Whenever we meet or hear from you, it will seem something of an approach to her, and do not fear but by the blessing of God our meetings may be cheerful and happy enough. I am sure you would think so, if you could see how *very* comfortable both my father and Elizabeth are, and how unaffectedly they enter into the spirit of everything that is going on around them. Indeed, I don't

think you would see any difference in my father, and I am not sure that you would in Elizabeth."

It was an additional trial to the former during this winter, that his increasing weakness prevented him from discharging his duties at Coln personally, to which Keble alludes in writing to me on the 22nd of January, 1827:—

"You would like to see my father, how very quietly he takes his suspension from clerical duties, which I used always to fear would be too sharp a trial for him whenever it took place. But it really does not seem to vex him at all. He stays at home, and is quite contented and cheerful, in the office, as he says, of Chaplain to Elizabeth. And Elizabeth's great delight is to do all the things that Mary Anne used to do, and fancy her only gone away for a short visit to a place where she is very happy, and soon to shew herself again; if one may call it fancy, which one verily believes to be the real truth."

He speaks of himself as—

"Having swung comfortably back to his old moorings, and certainly," says he, "it is more comfortable to have some one to say 'good bye' to every night, and not to have to eat and drink, and talk by oneself, only it remains to be proved whether one who has been usually very idle, when he had a good deal to do, will suddenly turn industrious, when his sphere of action is so much diminished. Certainly the days do not seem long, or irksome, but I am afraid that is a very equivocal sign of industry."

But he was not idle; he was now supplying his

father's place at Coln entirely, and as Coln was three miles off, it occupied more of his time than if he had been strictly resident. Moreover, that tax was now beginning to be imposed upon him, which in after life became very burthensome, the answering the letters of those who consulted him in their religious doubts and difficulties. This, it is well known, is the lot of many distinguished persons; but it is remarkable that it should have commenced with him at a time when he would have seemed to be so little known.

In the same letter, from which my last extract was made, he tells me that he had gone "through every word of an immense bundle of papers," the remains of a deceased convert from Quakerism, with a view to advising whether they should be published or not. He asks for information on the question whether the present Quakers maintained the opinions of George Fox and Co.; on which the answer in that case seemed to him to turn. Again, and about the same time, Cornish had consulted him on the conscientious difficulties of a young lady; and his answer is so sensible, that I cannot forbear transcribing it; many persons, I believe, are occasionally in the condition of the young lady; who may perhaps profit by the advice :—

"I am clearly of opinion the young lady should discontinue these observances which seem to fret and distract her so much. It seems like Fasting, which no one is tied to,

even by the laws of the Church, when it is *bonâ fide* against their health: much less by any rule they can set themselves. Clearly this is a case of melancholy from bodily constitution, and the person should be recommended to avoid all vows and singularities of every kind, as mere snares. I seem to be speaking so positively about what I must be ignorant of, that I am afraid my opinion is worth even less than usual: but supposing the representation in your friend's letter to be correct, and Jeremy Taylor right in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, touching the management of a scrupulous conscience, (p. 158 et seqq.,) I don't think I can be very wide of the mark; besides you have given me a pretty broad hint in what way you mean to proceed, and wish to be advised. At any rate a person of this temperament should be cautioned, as matter of *duty*, to refrain from binding herself by anything like voluntary vows in future; it is a mere snare, and should be repressed like any other temptation. If she cannot be quite satisfied, (as at times I suppose she will not,) with having broken through her own rule in this instance, why cannot she add one sentence to her morning or evening devotions, relating to this particular subject; this, if made habitual, would, as it seems to me, answer all purposes; but she must not be fanciful, and imagine one's prayers do no good if one is uncomfortable all the time. I am sure it would be bad enough with some of us, if we let present comfort come into our calculations on that matter.

"*Fairford, April* 28, 1827."

These are but instances; he was busy too in his theological reading, and acquiring that intimate knowledge of the Fathers, which had such a marked influence on his theological feeling, if I may use that

term, and the habitual train of his thoughts on any religious question. He was examining too, with an interest awakened by the times, the foundation and the limits of the alliance of Church and State, specially of the right of the latter to interfere with the former in matters purely ecclesiastical. In the letter dated June 22, 1827, in which he mentions the publication of "The Christian Year," he goes on to a consideration which seems to me very interesting, and which I know not whether any other writer has ever noticed or enlarged on. It was clearly an original thought to Keble:—

"The speculation," says he, "I referred to in a former letter, and on which you desired more explanation, was this. It seems clear to me, on reading over the Old Testament, that the example of the Jews *as a nation*, is there held out in such a way as to regulate and correct the religious conduct of us Christians *as individuals*. The covenant with them collectively was a type of that made with us separately; and the faults into which they fell analogous to what may be expected, and to what we really experience, in our own private dealings with the Almighty; this, I suppose, is what makes the Old Testament, as a whole, so useful to be considered by every Christian; and in this I persuade myself that I see a strong auxiliary evidence of the truth of both dispensations, as well as divers other useful corollaries, if I could but develope them; but it will take a great deal of reading, thinking, and writing, to make out the matter properly and usefully, and I have only, as it were, begun to think about it. I mention it to you, that you may tell me

if it seems absurd at first sight, or sufficiently done already. I should like, if I could, to turn my hours to some account; but long habits of idleness are not got over in a moment. I have been to Oxford once or twice lately, and it makes one quite fidgetty to see what a bustle and business every one is always in. I had half a mind to go to Bishop Lloyd and ask him to set me some task."

He had a great regard and respect for that good, and able, and original man, and he thought his services as Divinity Professor, especially the private Lectures which he instituted, extremely valuable. The Bishop also was very fond of him.

Although Keble speaks of his idleness, which indeed he was fond of doing, the preceding months of the year had brought about the completion, and finished the printing of "The Christian Year." Pursuing my plan of giving all details which seem to me at all interesting in respect of this great work, I must go back a little in my narrative and my extracts from his letters. In the beginning of February he acknowledges to me the return of some part of the manuscript which had been under my hands; he does this with his usual overflowing kindness, and I could hardly transcribe the passage, if I had not to qualify it by adding, that I believe after all he rejected, and with good reason, a very large proportion of my suggestions. The passage, moreover, adds a fact worth preserving as to the adviser to whom we owe the beautiful Verses on the "Occa-

sional Services," which, curiously enough, seem not to have formed part of his original plan :—

"Now I must thank you with all my might for the very kind trouble you have taken about my concerns ; you have set to work like a true friend, and I shall always love you the better for it, only I am afraid you have been taking a good deal more trouble than the affair was worth. I have set myself at work rather hardish to revise the MS., and have made a good many corrections, one or two I hope to re-write entirely ; and I also want to add something on each of the 'Occasional Services,' in pursuance of a hint I had from Davison. I have done a few stanzas for the Communion, and if I have a good spring-flow of rhyme, I hope to be ready with the others, as far as the Commination, in a month or six weeks, and then I purpose to go up to Oxford, and print without delay. I had wished to put it off for a year for the sake of the vignettes, but my father seems really anxious to have it done without loss of time, and I think one should be uncomfortable, if one did not try one's best to meet his wishes ; at the same time, I am quite aware of the defects you mention, and will do my best to mend them. I shall, however, be the more easy in not sending the rest of the MS. to you, as most of the passages you have marked were places which I was before dissatisfied with, and wished to alter ; in some few you have not caught my meaning, as I believe, through hurry, and in some I differ in grammar or taste ; but on the whole, I am exactly of your mind, and I hope to be a tolerable substitute for you in the office of criticising the rest. My theological plans, about which you enquire, are hardly plans enough to be stated on paper ; they are mere schemes floating loosely in my head. But when I have done this

job, and read one or two more of the Fathers, I hope to tell myself something more clearly about it. Farewell, my most dear friend.

"*Fairford, Feb*$^{y}$ 9, 1827."

The natural wish of his aged father to see the work published before he died, made it now to him an imperative duty to delay no longer; from this time he neither hesitated nor flagged in the prosecution of the work. His mention of vignettes had reference to a scheme, which he rather favoured at this time, of illustrating the book, with the help of some accomplished lady friends. Several vignettes, as he calls them, were indeed drawn; but he abandoned this idea, which Cornish dissuaded him from; and thenceforward he always opposed anything of the kind, though it was more than once pressed on him. I rather think he did not abide by the prudent resolution he announces of sending no more of the MS. to me for my criticism, for I possess a later and detailed acknowledgment, in which I was more surprised than pleased, to find that I had actually recommended the suppression entirely of the verses on the Tenth Sunday after Trinity. He meets this very simply with the remark, that it was a special favourite with some others of his critics.

On the 22nd of June, 1827, he announced to me that my copy of "The Christian Year" was on the road from Oxford, and on the next day I received it. His announcement was short and simple, and

without comment, and then he passed on, as he said, "to more interesting affairs." I am certain that he had not the slightest idea at the time how important was the gift he had made to the world, nor how decisive a step he had taken in respect of his own character and reputation. We who had watched the work from the beginning were somewhat more enlightened, perhaps; but we had not, I think, fully comprehended the importance of the volume; we had, indeed, a very high opinion of it; we thought it would gradually win its way, and would exercise a great influence on its readers, but we were none of us prepared for its immediate success, still less for such a success as befel it. I have lying before me Mr. J. H. Parker's summary of the account from the beginning to January, 1854; in this period of less than twenty-six years I find 108,000 copies were issued in forty-three editions. The sale of the work never flagged through the remainder of his life; and in the Memoir of Mr. Moor, to which I have so often referred, a statement is made (especially remarkable considering a circumstance to which I must advert presently), that in the nine months immediately following his death seven editions were issued of 11,000 copies.

After what I have said above of my critical success in regard to this work in the prime of my life, I should be very unwise if in advanced old age I were to venture on an elaborate criticism of it here.

Indeed, it seems to me hardly the fit subject for mere literary criticism as a volume of poetry. Whatever can be desired of that kind, however, has been admirably done already by Professor Shairp, of St. Andrews, in an "Essay on the Author of the Christian Year," published at Edinburgh in 1866, and those of my readers who shall be induced by this notice to read that masterly little book, will thank me, I am sure, for having referred them to it.

Yet the publication of "The Christian Year" was such an event in Keble's life, and the work itself so interesting and important, that I venture to set down, not with any system or order, what are rather my personal experiences in the reading it, than anything like regular criticism upon it. This may, perhaps, be the way in which my remarks may be most useful, especially to young persons. I will say, then, that it is one of those volumes of poetry which no one should take up to read through at once, or as a continued study; few volumes even of miscellaneous poetry will bear this; but the very design of "The Christian Year" protests against it; it was meant, and should be taken, as an accompaniment to the services of the Prayer-book. It will be found to have a special significance, if read as such; and for this mode of study and meditation, it is particularly fitted by two among other qualities. The first that it is so wonderfully Scriptural. Keble's mind was by long, and patient, and affectionate study of

Scripture, so imbued with it, that its language, its train of thought, its mode of reasoning, seem to flow out into his poetry, almost, one should think, unconsciously to himself. They are always there, yet never intruded. Many times, I may say for myself, the meaning of what had been an obscure passage in Holy Writ, or the true character and teaching of an incident, has flashed on me in reading the verses, of which it has been made the text for the day's meditation. I have heard of a clergyman in a rural parish in Worcestershire who was in the habit of reading, and explaining from the pulpit, in lieu of an afternoon sermon, the poem for the Sunday; and I have no doubt such a practice, with proper comments, might be pursued with very good effect. It has often struck me, what an excellent skeleton of a sermon this or that poem suggests. The second quality I would notice, is its almost inexhaustible novelty; whether this be owing to the depth of the thought, the pregnancy of the language, or, as severer critics have said, to the imperfect expression of the thought, or to all combined, I will not undertake to decide; but speaking generally, I should say, read it as often as you will, you will find it on each perusal to contain or to suggest some new matter for reflection. Take it up when you will, you are never likely to skim through a poem, as one sometimes does with what is familiar, however one may admire it; some

thought seemingly new will arrest your attention, make you pause, and set you upon consideration. This is surely a great merit in a volume of poems intended to serve in the way of a manual.

I would further suggest to a new reader of the book, to remark on the vivid accuracy of Keble's descriptions of natural incidents or objects. I think Dr. Stanley has somewhere observed on this merit in Keble's poetry in regard to what he had never seen, the scenery of the East, and specially of the Holy Land; but we may all of us judge of it generally in regard to our own country. He was short-sighted, and though he was fond of simple music, he had not a keen or accurate ear for it. He complains in a well-known passage of the dulness of his hearing to apprehend the full beauty of harmonious sounds; yet whether as to objects of sight or sound, his numberless descriptions are accurate, not only in the general, but in the slightest and most delicate features: he seems to have observed them all, as true poets are sure to do, with a lover-like, and yet a discriminating interest; and his language is never more definite and distinct than in these passages. It is hard to forbear, but I must not indulge myself in citations. There is still another circumstance, which I have always been struck with, the happiness with which he spiritualizes all that he describes of natural scenery, and how con-

stantly he deals with it in this way; one stanza I cite, not so much as an instance, but as illustrating my meaning:—

"He whose heart will bound to mark
The full bright burst of summer morn,
Loves too each little dewy spark
By leaf or flow'ret worn:
Cheap forms, and common hues, 'tis true,
Through the bright shower-drop meet his view;
The colouring may be of this earth;
*The lustre comes of heavenly birth.*"

*Second Sunday after Trinity.*

I am not now unfolding the beauties, or passing judgment on the faults, of this wonderful book; its great, and rapid, and not less its enduring success, it is not at first sight easy to account for; it certainly cannot be ascribed to its addressing especially any one party in the Church; although the opinions of the author, whoever he might be, were declared throughout with sufficient distinctness, yet the book found favour equally with all; it did not rest in the beginning on the great name of its author; for some time its author was not known, and had it been, he had earned no reputation in the world at large which could have procured him such a host of readers. When it ceased to be anonymous in substance, party heat in the Church, and the very distinction he had earned, might, one would have thought, have diminished its general acceptance.

I have no reason to believe that it has, even to the present time.

It is natural to ask to what cause especially is this exceptional success to be attributed, and will it still continue? I trust that an affirmative answer to the latter question may be given, founded on what I believe to be the true answer to the first. Of course the general success must be in a great measure attributed to the general merits of the execution; without the intrinsic beauty of the poetry, no success, or a very incomplete one, could have been obtained by the greatest excellence in the design; and, again, but for this last, the mere beauty of the poetry would, I think, after a while, have only placed the book on the library shelf with other volumes of beautiful poems in the language, a classic acknowledged and little read, exercising no daily and permanent influence. Now, as we know, a library book, or a book of the house, is just what it is not; it is rather a book of each person, and each room in the house. The design of it is very simply stated in the Preface. Keble wished to help towards the establishment of "a sober standard of feeling in matters of practical religion," and this by a work in close harmony with, and constant reference to, our Liturgy. In his title-page his motto is, "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." But this object, and this mode of obtaining it, both imply an appeal to a feeling, I believe, the most com-

mon and abiding in the heart of man, wherever absorbing worldliness or inveterate habits of vice have not overpowered it; I mean the religious and devotional sentiment. This may seem too flattering an estimate of the human heart, but it must be remembered, I do not speak of practice; I do not speak even of sentiment, that necessarily results in a good life; but of sentiment and feeling merely. So limited, I believe the proposition to be true. How much of the pleasure we all take in works of fiction is owing to the existence of this feeling in our hearts. Those who shrink from the trials which religion may impose, and those who feel willing to undergo them, equally find their hearts excited by the lively picture of suffering, or triumphant virtue, though with regard to the former some bitterness may mingle with the sweet; and these two classes make up the bulk of those who read. On the other hand, speaking generally, how cold are we in comparison to the story which tells us of the labours of intellect, the perseverance or ingenuity of the discoverer, the intrigues of the politician. And is not this because the former takes us more out of what is purely selfish, and brings us more close to what is religious in our nature? Now to this feeling in the human heart "The Christian Year" makes unceasing appeal, with a voice so earnest, so manifestly sincere, so sad in its hopefulness, so unpretending as to the speaker, yet so authoritative and confident as to the cause

and the subject, that for the time it is commonly irresistible; and to be so moved, as it is among the purest, so unquestionably it is among the highest of the pleasures which we are capable of enjoying.

This is an argument which I know must depend for its acceptance mainly on the inward consciousness and feelings of those to whom it may be addressed. And therefore I would ask any reader gifted with an ordinary degree of poetical feeling, what has been the effect of reading the verses for the day in "The Christian Year" under favourable circumstances of quiet and leisure? I apprehend that although immediately on the perusal, the thoughts which it occasions will vary much with the past conduct of the individual, in the end he will find he has passed very much into that state of feeling in regard to himself, which his conscience approves, and towards his fellow-creatures and his Maker that in which he would desire to be; he will feel soberly hopeful as to himself; loving, grateful, and reverential towards his Maker. And is not this the greatest happiness we can expect in this life. On these grounds I explain the Volume's exceptional and continued success, and I hope with great confidence for its indefinite enduring. It would lead me too far afield, if I compared its prospects on these grounds with Herbert's poems, which, however justly admired, and still studied by some, have certainly lost much of their general popularity. In truth the two men

were more alike than their works, and what I have said may be true of "The Christian Year," and yet could not be truly said of "The Church."

Keble would not have assented to these conclusions: as Wilkes is reported to have said he was no Wilkite, so Keble certainly was not a "Christian Year" man. Of course I do not suppose that he could think, or would profess, that it had no merits; like other modest men in regard to their own compositions, he thought these over-rated; and his taste and judgment made him very conscious of its faults in execution and finish; but this does not adequately explain the position of his mind with regard to it; it is strange, but it is certain that he always spoke of it, and that was seldom, with something of sadness and dissatisfaction. I do not think he often read it. There were reasons for this deeper than causes merely critical, and they are worth considering; the poems unavoidably paint Keble's own heart; they flowed out from it upon subjects which lay deepest and nearest to it, and no one can read them without believing all things good of the author. Keble felt this; he knew what the picture displayed; he knew it would be taken for a faithful likeness; he did not indeed fear the charge of self-display, but he thought the picture not true; he asked himself, was he then right in exhibiting it? and the good opinion of the world, on which he knew a woe had been pronounced, was

to him with this impression a cause of real sorrow. In his poem on the "Danger of Praise," in the *Lyra Innocentium*, he says :—

> "And ah! to him what tenfold woe,
> Who hides so well his sin,
> Through earth he seems a saint to go,
> Yet dies impure within."

I have no doubt he had reference here to himself. Praise was at all times really painful to him. In writing to him on his mother's death I had used language, the particulars of which I do not recollect—but I spoke of him and his discharge of filial duties as I sincerely felt. Dyson, it appears, and some others in their letters of consolation, had written in the same strain—in his answer to me, he says :—

"I am afraid I shall be able only to send you an unsatisfactory hurried sort of letter, but I would rather do so, than let time run on, as I have done so often before, without thanking you as I do from my heart for your kind consoling letter; kind in all respects except some partial expressions, such as I would beg it of you as a kindness to forbear; they please me so well at first, that I am quite sure they are best not thrown in my way; and when I come to look at them or think of them afterwards, they seem, as it were, to spoil the rest of the letter: *if you please, therefore,* do not send me any more of them."

To Dyson he says—

"Your kind letter came to me at Oxford at a moment when I needed it, and proved, I assure you, a real comfort

to me ; indeed, I fear I was more delighted than I ought, both with your letter and 2 or 3 others which I received at the same time ; for it is humiliating to see, on reading them over, how much undeserved credit one's friends give one. But this will not bear talking about."

It was the one subject on which ever after I was obliged in writing to him to be very guarded in my language, even when I wrote on occasions which had excited my feelings of admiration strongly ; for though he could not write otherwise than gently and affectionately, I felt sure I had given him pain.

I have already printed an extract from his letter to Mr. Pruen respecting the Dedication. That is now very properly printed, I believe, in the Editions which have issued since his death, but he never would print it during his life. I remember when, in 1858, he allowed Mr. Parker to publish a handsome Edition in small folio, I suggested, or, rather, asked his permission for the printing it ; he would not absolutely deny me, but he yielded in language manifesting so clearly his unwillingness, that it would have been unkind to act on it, and I forbore.

In all this he was perfectly sincere, nor can I think his feeling morbid, or unreasonable, though it may have been, indeed was in my judgment, exaggerated. The more pure and holy a man is, the more odious will sin be to him ; and beside this, the more entirely will he refer every successful resistance to temptation, every good thought, all continuance in

purity to the special favour of God, and feel that it calls on him for a more lively gratitude than common; so that every declension, through human infirmity unavoidable, will come to his conscience embittered with the sense of special ingratitude; sin in one who feels himself so favoured will seem double sin. This, I think, is the explanation of the declaration of St. Paul respecting himself, which I have always looked on as perfectly sincere. I am not comparing Keble, of course, with the great Apostle, but the same principle of judgment applies to both, indeed, to all good men; and when they say such things of themselves, though we may think them too severe in their judgments, we should acquit them of insincerity, and the miserable weakness of seeking for compliments.

Keble always published "The Christian Year" anonymously: at first the secret of authorship was tolerably well kept, but it was a prisoner committed to the custody of too many not to escape soon; however he availed himself always of the masque as he pleased, and sometimes he played with it amusingly enough. Not long after the publication, an old pupil, Mr. Bliss, in writing to him, mentioned the work, with some speculation as to the author; it might be, intending only to sound him; he answers, however:—

"I have seen the little book you mention, and I think I have heard it was written by an Oriel man. I have no

wish to detract from its merit, but I can't say I am much in expectation of its cutting out our friend George Herbert."

I add, mainly for another reason, two notes written to a dignitary of the Church long after, who had questioned him as to the use of the word "wildering" in the verses on the Fifth Sunday in Lent:—

"Ye, too, who tend Christ's *wildering* flock."

He says in answer:—

"My Dear ——,

"It is very little use being anonymous, if one is to answer for the sense, or nonsense of all one writes just the same.

"But do you not think that such a passage as Ezekiel xxxiv. 12, in the Bible, and the mention of 'Christ's sheep that are scattered abroad' in the Ordination Service, joined with the present state of Christendom, is enough to justify and explain the word?

"You know the 'C. Y.' (as far as I remember it) every where supposes the Church to be in a state of decay.

"Ever my dear friend,

"affect^ly yours,

"J. Keble."

To this there was a reply which I have not seen, and to that this rejoinder:—

"Brooking near Totness,

"*April* 15, 1858.

"My Dear ——,

"As a proof that my conscience is not quite gone, I had really put your letter up to be answered among others

when I left home for this place, and I now return its inclosures with many thanks. It is very pleasant to find so much sympathy with one's own travelling thoughts, such as they were in times past, or rather such as one wished them to be.

"With respect to the word which gave occasion to our little correspondence, I find that according to Johnson there is or was such word as 'wildering' or 'to wilder'—only unluckily for me it is a verb active—the same as to 'bewilder.' So it must be considered an error, and 'wandering' or some such word must be kindly substituted for it. I find it unluckily in the Oxford 'Psalter' also.

"I am always,
"My dear ——,
"Affect^ly your's,
"J. KEBLE."

It occurs in other parts of the book.

In spite of his concluding sentence it will be found, I believe, that the word "wildering" remained in all the editions published in his lifetime, and the line remains unaltered still. It happened to me more than once to point out some inaccuracy of language, or metre, admitting easily of correction; he used to answer not unkindly, but coldly, and intimated in effect that it was not worth while to alter it. This was the result, in great measure, of the feeling which he had grown to entertain towards the book, as well as of his constant occupation and the habit of procrastination, which, of course, did not decrease with years. He seemed to me not unconscious of the merits of the book, or of its probable usefulness;

but as if he half wished to disconnect himself from it, and as if he would rather it had been the work of some one else than himself. I have accounted for this, which seems so strange, as well as I can.

In the first two editions, there were no verses on what are called the State Services; he did not regard them as an integral part of the Common Prayer-book, and I cannot now recall why he was induced to write upon them. In the verses on the "Gunpowder Treason" he wrote a stanza, which on the first reading might certainly lead one to suppose that he denied the Presence of our Lord's Body in the Elements after consecration. Nobody, however, who knew his opinions on this subject, (and they were expressed openly again and again in public, and in private, and in print, with earnestness and uniformity,) could believe that he intended to be so understood; and when challenged on the subject, he always maintained that his language was misunderstood, and that any writer whose sentiments were unquestionably known should in justice have his language interpreted according to those sentiments, where the meaning was not necessarily opposed to them. He pointed out that the omission of the word "only" after the expression "not in the hands," raised the whole difficulty, and for that short way of speaking he referred to passages in Scripture, which are numerous, as authority. The matter was mentioned to him several times, but he declined to make any alteration. Some weeks before

his death, however, a member of the Upper House of Convocation, addressing it, quoted the lines with approbation in the sense most commonly attributed to them; this he thought entirely altered the case, and ought to prevent him from any longer overlooking or acquiescing in the misinterpretation, and he determined therefore to accept an alteration which had been before suggested by a friend; he at once directed that when a new edition should be called for, this should be substituted for the old reading, with a note, the substance of which he dictated. At the time he did this, there was no illness upon him which apparently threatened his life; a fortnight later, in a note to me about Mrs. Keble's state, he says, "As for myself, I eat, drink, and sleep heartily, so you need be in no care about me so far." His anxiety was entirely about her, and both contemplated that he would be the survivor. It pleased God that he should die first. She to whom he bequeathed the copyright, naturally felt bound by the injunction; and when she bequeathed the copyright to her nephew, she imposed it on him,—this direction he of course obeyed.

It cannot be doubted, on these facts, that the alteration was Keble's own as much as if he had written it himself years before, and that neither Mrs. Keble, or her nephew, could properly exercise any discretion in the matter. It would have seemed a matter of course for the latter to make it; and in-

deed, when thus explained, to be of little importance in itself. Keble's belief, it must be remembered, had been long and generally known; no one could have cited him as an authority for the doctrine which the words were supposed to convey; and it is difficult to understand how any one, knowing his belief, could desire to circulate as his any verses, with the intention thereby of conveying something entirely contrary to it, and acquiring thereby his authority for that which he neither thought nor believed. I must not be understood as making any insinuation of this kind in regard to the Right Reverend Bishop, who, citing the verse to grace the peroration of a speech, certainly was, in fact, the immediate occasion of the alteration. Nor, indeed, do I make any imputation against any individual, or any Body; what was said and done in consequence—though I cannot approve it—was, I doubt not, done upon grounds which seemed justifiable to the doers.

To one who is familiar with Keble's diction in "The Christian Year," there is no difficulty in understanding how an ambiguity of expression might occur; and to one who knew him long and well, there is equally no difficulty in understanding either why the alteration was not made before, or why it was directed to be made at the time it was made. I do not think it was a happy one; but that the direction was given under improper pressure at a time when his judgment was obscured, or his power of maintaining his own opinion enfeebled (and both

have been insinuated,) I am concerned strongly to deny; and those who impute that, I hope have not considered how grave an imputation they cast on his widow and her nephew, who must have known if such had taken place. But there is the most abundant evidence that this subject was perfectly familiar to Keble, and had been on his mind for years. By the kindness of a neighbouring clergyman, the Rev. Samuel Walker, who had written to him in February, 1863, I am able to print the material part of a letter, which sets this at rest:—

"My dear Sir,

"I am obliged by your kind suggestion regarding the passage in the 'Christian Year.' For many years it has been a matter which I have thought of at odd times, and you will find in my dear friend Hurrell Froude's 'Remains' that complaints were made of it near thirty years ago. I thought of an alteration, but other friends over-ruled it. Nor am I at present disposed to make any. Your's, I fear, would hardly come up to what is wanted in the way of doctrine. In a Note to the Preface of the Second Edition of a book of mine, which nobody reads, on 'Eucharistical Adoration,' I have given my own commentary on it: that it is to be understood, "Not in the hands *only*," as against a carnal presence—vide S. John vi. 63; and the same idiom recurs elsewhere.

"I have been shewn a passage in St. Bernard, but cannot now recall it, which seemed to me to justify the expression.

"Do you not think that if it *can* be justified, it had best be retained, were it only to help in shewing, that such sayings do not necessarily bear such a meaning, and must be

interpreted consistently with the writer's sentiments known unquestionably in other ways?"

Thus he wrote more than three years before his death, and thus he could not have written, had he intended to teach what those, who quarrelled with the alteration, desired he should be understood to have taught.

There is a story recorded by Isaac Walton, regarding George Herbert's "Temple," which is very apposite, and I will close what I have felt compelled to say on this painful matter, with repeating it. It is well known that in his last illness George Herbert committed the manuscript to the care of his friend Nicholas Ferrar, desiring him to publish it or burn it, according as he should think "it might turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul," or not.

Mr. Ferrar, it is said, found that "there was in it the picture of a divine soul in every page, and that the whole book was such a harmony of holy passions, as would enrich the world with pleasure and piety:" he proceeded accordingly to publish.

"And this," says Walton, "ought to be noted, that when Mr. Ferrar sent this book to Cambridge to be licensed for the press, the Vice-Chancellor would by no means allow of the two so much noted verses—

> "Religion stands a tip-toe in our land,
> Ready to pass to the American strand,"

to be printed.

No doubt the Vice-Chancellor thought them untrue

in fact, and likely to be injurious to the Church; which at that time many might see reason for believing. Nicholas Ferrar, however, felt that he had no power to enter into such considerations, and the controversy finally ended thus: "The Vice-Chancellor said, I knew Mr. Herbert well, and know that he had many heavenly speculations, and was a divine poet; but I hope the world will not take him to be an inspired prophet, and *therefore* I license the *whole* book."

Nicholas Ferrar discharged a plain duty conscientiously, and the Vice-Chancellor acted with great good sense.

# CHAPTER IX.

## PROVOSTSHIP OF ORIEL.—EDITION OF HOOKER'S WORKS.—INDIA-HOUSE EXAMINATIONS.

KEBLE was called on as early as the fall of the year 1827 to prepare "The Christian Year" for a second edition ;—

"But," he says, writing to me in September, "I own I am a little heartless about correcting ; if things don't come of themselves, I very seldom find they come upon my calling for them. Moreover, having done admiring the print and paper, I find my own defects staring me more and more in the face as I read ; so it is to be feared I shall not do much for one while."

In answer I pressed him :—

"Pray let no tædium or laziness prevent you from buckling yourself up to the task with an ardent spirit ; they are so good, and may do so much, that it is a *duty* to make them as perfect as possible ; *the* fault is obscurity of expression, here and there, and inadequacy in other places."

And then I went on into some particulars, but to borrow Wordsworth's words :—

> "'Twas throwing words away ; for still
> The *wayward bard* would have *his* will."

But now came an event which occupied his atten-

tion considerably for a short while. Dr. Copleston was raised to the Bench as Bishop of Llandaff, and at the same time appointed to the Deanery of St. Paul's; he had been Dean of Chester, and held that office with the Provostship, a not unusual thing at that time. Indeed, there were shortly before two instances at Oxford, of Heads of Houses remaining such as Bishops. But with Dr. Copleston this was quite out of the question. Of course Keble's friends were anxious to see him at the Head of Oriel, and I find both Dyson and I wrote to him; how Dyson expressed himself I do not know, but I must have written unguardedly and one-sidedly. He answered me thus, after playing a little with the supposition that there might after all be no vacancy:—

"Fairford,
"*Dec.* 3, 1827.

"To say the truth, I should not at all choose, just at present, to have to make up my mind on the matter you propose to me; a thousand things would come in, of which no one but myself *can possibly* judge, and which would make it rather a perplexing case to me. I am not so insensible to ambition, and that sort of thing, as you seem to think me; and many such letters as your last would, I am afraid, help to make me more or less uncomfortable in retirement; however, in my cool and deliberate judgment, which I am *sure* I am now exerting, this first Monday in Advent, 1827, I must protest against the doctrine, that a man may not be as truly and thoroughly useful in such a situation as I am now in, or in any other which Pro-

vidence may put him into, as if he moved in a commanding sphere, and were what the world calls an influential character. I hope, therefore, if there is a vacancy, and the Fellows propose it to me, that I shall be able to see my way clearly, and come to a right decision; at present I really do not know what I should answer, and I repeat it again, that nobody *can judge* for me. At any rate, *if you please* do not mention my name as connected with this subject till you are sure there is a vacancy. It must be very unpleasant to Copleston, if he should hear of it; and I know the temper of Oriel well enough to be sure that any interference, even of the most friendly and delicate kind, would not be well received there. And now having, I trust, set myself up by this last sentence in your honour's opinion *as a diplomatic man*, and a *man of the world*, I must thank you for your answer to my case."

"Fairford,
"*Jan.* 14, 1828.

"My dear old Dyson,

"I have been looking to-day at your letter touching the Provostship, and have condemned myself of great ungraciousness in not having answered it sooner. You will have heard, I dare say, before now, how the matter is settled; before I heard from you, I had consented to be voted for, but finding there was great difference of opinion, (all, however, in a friendly way,) and that I was very likely, I may say almost sure, to be left in a minority, and feeling moreover that a Headship at Oxford, though no doubt a comfortable respectable concern, would by no means realise my beau ideal of life, and most especially feeling that Hawkins would come to the work quite free and disengaged, while I should be every moment hankering after Fairford,

Bisley, or some such place,—all these things considered, I determined within a few days of the receipt of your letter, to abandon all thought of the offer, and wrote to my *partizans*, if I may call them so, accordingly. And I have not as yet begun to repent of doing so; indeed, the more I consider the affair, the more I am sure it was right; and I am very glad you agree with me in thinking so, for I am quite sure you do. All here, and at Bisley, take just the same view of the matter as I do; and so 'tis all just as it should be."

It was not, of course, with out-college men mainly that he corresponded on this subject. Froude, it seems, was the first who communicated to him the Bishop's resignation. Keble says:—

"I must beg a few days for consideration before I answer positively; I feel Hawkins's claim to be a very strong one, and almost doubt whether it is right for anybody in the world to be set up, when his inclinations are known."

And he closes this letter with a playful message:—

"My very kind love to old Hawkins, and tell him I think we had better put the Provostship in commission; Tyler take the red gown, Hawkins the work, and I the play. Qu'en pensez vous?"

Before, however, the end of 1827 he had made up his mind; and he writes thus to Froude:—

"Fairford, St. John's Day.

"Since you went away I have been endeavouring (for without any proem, I think fit to enter at once into the

selfish part of this letter) to look this matter of the Provostship clearly in the face, and find out exactly what I had best do: all being brought into a sum, to the best of my poor judgment, I think I must, with all possible love and thanks to you and others who think as you do, decline it altogether. I don't act thus quite upon public grounds; for to say the plain truth, as far as I can fancy myself judging impartially in such a matter, I can make out but very little difference between H. and myself in positive fitness for the thing; in some respects I look on each of us as fitter than the other. But I have great doubts whether I should be so comfortable there as I am now; and I don't suppose he has any doubt at all. I have calls, as you know, elsewhere of a more pressing nature than he. I don't fancy College a pleasant place for one's father and sister to visit one at, &c., &c., &c. Now although these objections might all give way, and ought to do so, if one's College absolutely called upon one as the only person, they come in with what I feel to be decisive force, when there is a difference of opinion to encourage one's natural wish of getting over things as quietly as possible. In case any sort of unpleasant feeling should arise, one should immediately say, 'now this is my fault;' and in a College, and among clergymen, a great deal should surely be given up to ensure freedom from factions and envy. And 'after all our superior advantages, Fellows of Oriel are but men,' and Provosts *in esse* or *in posse*, not *many* degrees superior in the scale of existence.

"Therefore, my dear fellow, don't think of me any more, but let good old Hawkins walk over the course; and what I say to you, I mean to say to him, to Plumer, and perhaps one or two more, by to-morrow's post. And I feel myself *safe* in this resolution, which I should not by any means

in the opposite one. For indeed I don't imagine my constitution at all charmed against the Oxford epidemic, rather I should say, the Doctorial epidemic everywhere, if you know what that is."

The kindly feeling these extracts express towards Dr. Hawkins was, I am sure, returned on his part; and pleasant indeed it is to see a College Election, which is commonly so exciting, conducted between those, who might be considered opposing candidates, in so amiable a spirit.

Keble wrote to me after the election was over, on the 11th of February, 1828, from Fairford. His letter commences with affectionate expressions of sympathy at two family losses, with which we had been visited :—

"In both cases I know you have the best of consolations in remembering the kindness and goodness of those who are gone. It is a topic of comfort, that one feels more and more, the longer one considers it, to be quite inexhaustible. I dare say you were as glad as I was to meet once again the good old Dyson, as fresh and as cordial as ever. It was an unexpected delight, when I went up to Oxford to the Oriel election, to get a thorough coze with him. How comfortable he seems in his work of coin-inspecting and date-hunting; and is it not rather a rare piece of philosophy, that he should take pleasure in the very expectation of finding his work too great for him ever to finish. By this time I conclude his wife has joined him again; and perhaps I may run up and spend a day or two with them, when Noel Ellison is there, he having promised to take them in his way from the North to Huntspill.

"I hope you don't think I did wrong in the Oriel affair. If there had been anything like an unanimous call of the Fellows, I certainly should have thought it right to go; although I am not at all clear that the change would have been for my comfort. As things were, I felt that I was taking the safe side in declining all thoughts of the thing; it was not a clear *call*, and I hold it under such circumstances always best to let well alone. I do not deny that it might perhaps be more comfortable for me to have fuller employment than I have, yet there must surely be enough for one to do, if one had but a little regular industry, and common sense. For instance, one's time would be well spent in making a sort of analytical index for the next edition of the Ethics, or the Ecclesiastical Polity, or Bishop Butler; therefore I have made up my mind to leave off complaining of want of work, and to keep contented with my Father and Elizabeth, until I have, as I said, a clear *call* elsewhere."

These letters shew distinctly under what influences Keble acted in respect of the Headship of his College; had there been no difference of opinion among the Fellows, he would have obeyed their call, and been, I am sure, gratified by it; he would have felt it a duty; and he was besides very fond of Oxford, of literary society, and of young men; but he would have gone there with some misgivings, and I can hardly think without some forebodings. Within his College, as the father and friend and pastor, in some sense, of his Fellows and the Students, I suppose no one could have excelled him. In these re-

spects I still think we were right in pressing him to entertain the notion heartily, and to let his inclinations become known at once, and decidedly. We were fond enough of him to think that in these respects, without any formality, or pretentiousness, which might provoke opposition, or ridicule, he would exhibit a sort of model to the University, and contribute to make a great change for the better in its tone and manners. But the duties of the Head of a House in those days, even more than now, extended beyond the walls of his College; and already there were symptoms, which could hardly have escaped his penetration, of the troubles and hot disputes which not long after began to agitate the University, and not least the Governing Body, of which he would have been a member. In these it is too clear now that he would have been in a minority, and perhaps the very reputation and personal influence which I will suppose him to have acquired, as well as his great ability, might have made his position only the more painful to one of his sensitive nature. Looking back on this passage of his life, I cannot but recognise his non-election as one of those disappointments, (how frequent they are,) which one comes to regard as special blessings; disappointment I am bound to say as to this, to us rather than to himself.

In the June following he visited me in London, and I am tempted to make an extract or two from

the first letter I had from him after he had left me; this was not until August 21, 1828:—

"What a shame; it is the 21st August, and I have not written to thank you for the pleasant days you gave me the beginning of June, for indeed I don't know when I have enjoyed anything so much as my visit to you; it is a peculiar delight to find anything so domestic and comfortable, so much like a country parsonage, as your house in the middle of Law and London. I know we Curates ought to enjoy ourselves a great deal more than we do; but, as it is, we are a sad grumbling race, and I doubt whether $\frac{2}{3}$ of us get as much pleasure from the trees and shrubs we live always amongst, as you do from the *snatch* you get in your Square for $\frac{1}{2}$ an hour before dinner when you come home from chambers. . . . .

"I heard yesterday from Arnold, who seems to be fast taking root at Rugby, and will soon fill the school I dare say. I only hope he will not teach them his own notions of right and wrong in politics. He says you have got some of his Thucydides; don't sit up at night correcting it, when you ought to be asleep. I charge you, rather send it to me, if you find it an incumbrance, without minding what the book may lose (or gain) by the difference between us. I very much admire the sort of cheerful, straight-forward way, in which Tommy sets out on his new career. I am sure he is right, and much to be imitated in that, whatever he may be in his notions about some matters."

"Poor Churton, about whom I was so anxious when I visited you, gets rapidly worse, and all hope is given up. He will be a great and irreparable loss to his family and friends; but I never knew any one whom one could trust on a death-bed, humanly speaking, with more confidence,

that all would turn out well. The only uncomfortable thing is, that his case, (I am much afraid,) was mistaken; and he was sent to Brighton at a time when it was probably one of the worst things he could do to go there. However, I do not know why one should be *vexed* at a mistake of this kind, more than at other circumstances, in a friend's illness. It is setting up for more infallibility than we have any right to."

In the September of this year, 1828, he went to Lyme, and I mention this, because this was the first occasion on which I find the name of his future wife introduced into his correspondence. He went "to convoy her and her mother" for her health:—

"She had been but drooping," he says, "ever since the Spring, and I was not sorry myself for a bit of an excuse to smell, taste, see, and hear my dear friend the sea, whom I seem to like better and better every year of my life. I staid three Sundays, and only came home Saturday week. . . . . I should very much like to have gone on when I was so far West; but I made a kind of vow to stay quietly, bathe, write, and read, the first of which good resolutions I performed much more accurately than either of the others, to the great strengthening of my nerves, and damage of my complexion. The Clarkes are not yet come home, but Charlotte seemed much mended when I left them; and we are in good hope she will now be as well as ever again; she is never a very strong body. Lyme is a beautiful bit of coast to my fancy, one can hardly imagine oneself so near your red cliffs at Sidmouth, the colouring, form, and everything is so very different. What most strikes me in all these little absences of mine, is the amazing rate at

which Puritanism seems to be getting on all over the kingdom; if I may judge from what I heard in church and out, the old-fashioned way of Divinity is quite the exception, not the rule, in that district."

This intimation of an unfavourable opinion in regard to the Party in the Church, which was then fighting its way upwards to what I suppose it must be admitted that it has now attained, a more than equal share in numbers and influence, was not now made for the first time; his convictions on this subject were very deep-seated in his mind, and were occasioned by no personal, or political feelings; but by a conviction that it was in error on some points of belief, which to him were cardinal; and moreover that it was in its effects adverse to that quietness of spirit, humility and charity, which were to him above all price. I need not say that these differences created in him no unkind feeling towards any individual, nor any insensibility to Christian graces, wherever he found them.

The close of the year 1828, and the beginning of 1829, were agitated, it may be remembered, by the vehement discussions of the Roman Catholic Question. Mr. Peel's change of opinion on that subject, his voluntary resignation of his seat for the University of Oxford, and then allowing himself to be proposed for re-election, produced a violent division of parties there. I am not going into these matters now, and I only mention them as they bear personally on

Keble. He had been brought up in, and cherished from conviction, opinions hostile to the proposed concessions, and he was moreover one of that numerous body of men who thought it would be a degradation to the University to return Mr. Peel, "being in office especially," after what had happened. I had been brought up as he had, and had not then changed my convictions on the question, but I differed with him in the conclusion he drew as to the seat. I thought Mr. Peel unquestionably the best man we could elect, and that having changed his mind, as it was fair to presume, from a knowledge of facts, which we had not, and a sense of necessity, of which we could be no judges, there was nothing in his conduct to warrant our rejection of him. While for the University I thought, (as I should for individuals,) it would be wise and manly to face the groundless imputation of time-serving rather than dismiss the tried and most efficient servant for doing what he believed to be his duty. So I resolved to vote for Mr. Peel, and I would not decline to be on his Committee. My dear friend was very much distressed; he wrote shortly, and with some heat, and evidently in a wounded spirit. It must be remembered that on all such questions his opinions were "stuff of the conscience." How I answered him I do not remember; but we met at the election on opposite sides with perfect cordiality, and his letters resumed immediately their old affectionate tone. Not, in-

deed, that he changed his opinions. Writing to Froude, in March, 1829, he says :—

"As touching politics, I am in the same mind that I always was, that we could not do otherwise than we did in the Election. But I am quite satisfied of Peel's good intentions, though I cannot acquit him of weakness in giving way for the reasons he states. Yet I give him credit now for no ordinary virtue in keeping his place, when he *had* given way. The upshot is, that I think well of him, and ill of his measures; and that I have very little hope of his ever recovering the confidence of the Tories again."

Towards the close of the year 1829, Archdeacon Heathcote died, and Sir William offered Keble the living; it was a great temptation to him; the circumstances, and the manner of the offer touched his heart; he was fond of the place, and the people, and affectionately attached to, and in point of opinions, in entire agreement with, the Patron. Writing to me, he says :—

"Another old friend I have lost, Archdeacon Heathcote, of whom I knew less, but have every reason to think highly; indeed, to reproach myself for not having thought highly enough of him whilst he lived, now I know with what grievous bodily pain he had to struggle in order to maintain that composure of his. I was at Hursley a fortnight ago, considering and devising whether or how to accept the Vicarage which was most kindly offered me; but after a good deal of doubt, and some anxiety, I have written to decline it finally. I like Heathcote as well as

ever, and am quite sure he will put it in good hands. I thought of Johnny and Henry, and our reclinings and wheelings under the large elms, now (most of them) no more. I have accepted a Nomination as Examiner at the India House, mainly in hope of getting a visit to you, and now the rogues have fixed it to the 31st March, when I fear you will be away. But if we live till November, perhaps we may make it up."

Thus he seemed to have extinguished all hope of his ever becoming Vicar of Hursley, because he would not quit the care of his father; in his place the Archdeacon's son was presented, the Rev. Gilbert Wall Heathcote, a man much younger than himself; he was presented absolutely, and there was no reason to anticipate another opportunity of bringing Keble there.

The India House Examinations, of which he speaks, were instituted under an Act of Parliament passed in 1826, (the 7 G. IV. c. 56,) with the object of supplying more Civil servants for the East India Company than Haileybury was found able to educate. Oxford and Cambridge were to nominate each two Examiners, who should examine candidates at the India House in March and October in each year, and Keble acted in this capacity for the years 1830 and 1831; in the former year I find among his colleagues the name of the present Bishop of St. David's. It seems to have been an office which the Universities filled with men among the most distinguished of their

members, and to which such men were well pleased to be appointed. The present Bishops of St. Asaph and Llandaff, were among them. The appointment of Keble was a matter of considerable interest to me, in the hope it gave me of seeing him more often in London.

His letters were somewhat less frequent at this period, but when he wrote, it was in a light-hearted, affectionate strain, as usual. Thus he begins to me on one occasion :—

"My dear Friend,—'What unknown correspondent is this.' say you to Mrs. J. T. C., before you break the seal. 'Oh,' says she, 'I think I have an indistinct remembrance of the hand. Do break it open and see.' 'Well, I have, and he calls me "dear friend;" let's look to the end of the letter. Oh, Keble: aye, I think I do remember such a name, but the creature used me so ill in not answering my friendly enquiries for half a year together, or more, that I am almost inclined to have nothing more to do with him.' All this, and if there be aught worse which peremptory justice may dictate, I humbly acknowledge myself to have deserved at your Worship's hands, for I really have no excuse. Our health, thanks to our constant Preserver, has continued as usual."

Then he goes on to tell me of his family, and a visit he had been paying at his brother's :—

"Tom," says he, "and I set to work and gave little Tom a regular lecture in Toryism and High-Churchmanship in a large folio Clarendon with prints; he snaps at all the Roundheads, and kisses all the Cavaliers; moreover, he has a great opinion of Edward VI., but is a little perplexed

to know whether Popery is dead or no. As for his sister, she is all fat and fun, and does not trouble herself with Politics yet. And yet for all these good things, I have been too cross and lazy to write a friendly line to my kind host and hostess and Godchild, and all in whom I am interested in Torrington Square; but I am really ashamed, so do not be too hard upon me."

According to his promise, he came to us in October for the India House Examinations. He talked, as he had written, in great admiration of Miller's new volume of sermons; and those who are desirous of following his judgment in such matters may like to be told that his favourite sermons were three, those against judging by comparisons, on Family Worship, and on the fiftieth Psalm; these he was desirous of reprinting in a cheaper form for the use of the poor.

This, it will be remembered, was the winter remarkable for the formidable agrarian riots in the Western counties. He had now been for years an attentive and honest observer of the condition of the labouring classes, and their feelings. I was one of the Counsel for the Crown who attended the Special Commission into Wiltshire, and had written to him my impressions from Salisbury. I will not give the whole of his answer, but it is worth while to extract a portion:—

"We have been very much taken up ever since the end of November with talking and thinking of the tumults afore-

said. I am not inclined so much as you are, I think, to lay the blame of them on the farmers; no doubt their insolence in many cases, and their extortion in some, has aggravated the tendency to riot; but I am more and more satisfied that old Malthus, hard and vulgar as he is in many things, and much as my father and Southey taught me to dislike him, has hit the right nail on the head; and that something of this sort sooner or later was the infallible fruit of the 43rd Eliz."

He was against all arbitrary or extorted increase of wages beyond what the fair market price of produce would enable the farmers to pay; and relied for improvement in the condition of the labourers on a gradual emigration, accompanied by a gradual repeal of the Poor Laws as regarded able-bodied men and children.

It will be seen how much this agrees in substance with what not long after was actually done, and no doubt with good effect; but I cite the passage rather for the sake of shewing how he could cast aside in the pursuit of truth a very strong prejudice —and few could have a stronger than he had against Malthus. His was exactly the mind, which turned with something like disgust at one or two of the leading positions of that writer's celebrated work. He was very intent upon this matter, and I find a letter to Dyson, from which I shall have to make an extract immediately, is written on the blank leaf of a printed sketch of his "Plan for the Gradual

Amendment of the System of Parochial Relief in the Southern Counties of England;" the principle of his scheme was the promotion of emigration, and the means were mainly the empowering of parishes to borrow money on the rates; but I notice that he had not overlooked, what, in legislation on such matters as relief of the poor, and the education of their children, seems too commonly forgotten, the broad distinction between the South and North of England.

The letter to which I have just referred relates to a totally different subject. My readers will remember a letter written at the close of the discussion about the Provostship of Oriel, in which, among other possible and proper employments for his time, Keble spoke of the preparation of an Analytical Index to the "Ecclesiastical Polity;" he was now called on to undertake the more worthy employment of editing for the Clarendon Press a new edition of the great work itself. What he did upon this call, and how he did it, are now well known; but in such a matter I think it will be interesting to follow his course by steps, and to see how, from a very inadequate conception on the part of the Delegates in the first instance, he was enabled to work out to a great extent his own views, and to vindicate both the book itself and the author from much ill-usage and misconception.

Keble had been an enthusiast about Hooker from

his early youth; the great man's connection with Corpus, and the relics relating to him, preserved in our Archives, (as a certain special portion of the Library was called,) with which Keble and his brother as early as 1816 had busied themselves, helped to increase this feeling; partly it was what may be called political; partly, and I think for the greater part, it was religious: if he could have been bitter in anything, it would have been in his condemnation of the old Puritanical spirit, which seemed to him alien from the better spirit of the Church of England, as he shaped her to his own imagination. The pilgrimage to Hooker's grave with Tucker was among his youthful indulgences; and he wrote, in 1817, standing by it in a silent shower, that beautiful sonnet, which will be found among his early poems. The editions extant of the works were quite unworthy of them, inaccurate in the text, and inconvenient in the use; moreover, he had reason to believe, on better than the common evidence, that they were, as to important parts, very corrupted. I have no doubt it was a delight to him to be invited by the Delegates of the Press, through Cardwell, one of them, to undertake the office of Editor.

On Dec. 18, 1830, he writes to Dyson thus:—

"I heard from Cardwell the other day that a new edition of Hooker is in contemplation at the Clarendon, and he wants me to undertake it; I don't very well know what such an undertaking implies; but he says it will be a mere

reprint, he thinks, if I decline it: so I think of trying it, if I can get you and Tom to help; or rather I should like for you, most venerable, to be *the* editor, and for Tom and me to be under-strappers; and if you will allow me, I will propose this to Cardwell. At any rate, I wish you would give me your opinion as to what is wanted for a good edition of Hooker, and then I shall be able to judge whether I can decently undertake it. I am still in abeyance about the Psalms, and waiting for a good opportunity of communicating with the Archbishop, or rather, I should say, I shrink from writing to him, because I feel sure that in his extreme caution he would damp my project at once. However, I suppose I shall take courage some day. We are full just now of political, or rather rural economy; and emigration seems the order of the day among us. I have got a little scheme with regard to that, which I should like much to have your opinion on. In short, there is no end of the things I have to talk over with you; indeed, how should it be otherwise in these times with two such great politicians. I was much amused at Oxford to hear the old Liberals talking rank Jacobitism the other day. L—— L——, I understand, wishes for a military government. And to conclude, be the constitution what it may, you are hereby wished a merry Christmas and a happy New Year, and may it not pass away without our exchanging visits. And so we all rest your's and your Lady's very affectionates,

"THE KEBLES."

He writes again to Dyson on the 18th of January, 1831, very shortly :—

"The purport of this is rather to ask you, *bonâ fide*, *will* you help me about Hooker? And if you won't, will you

give me a little hint or two, what one had best do? You see I have accepted Cardwell's proposal, thinking I could not do worse than nothing, and he said the choice was between us two—me and nothing. The smallest donation in the way of advice, &c., will be thankfully received. I must be ready with a proposal to lay before the Delegates by the end of this month, when I go to Oxford to preach; *verbum sat sapienti.*"

I do not know what answer Dyson had sent him to the first of these two letters; but it is clear from that which now follows, that to the second he had sent one full and well considered. And it is satisfactory to know that in the end both the haste and the scruples of the Delegates were overcome, and Keble was allowed to pursue his own course, and produce an edition worthy of the subject-matter, and of all the parties concerned in the publication.

"*Feb.* 10, 1831.

"My dear Dyson,

"Many thanks for your welcome letter of 'Advice to a Middle-aged Editor,' full of most useful hints, and many more thanks for your kind offer of assistance. I drew up a proposal which Cardwell laid before Mess^rs^ the Delegates (a most disagreeable word, for it puts one in mind of Paris, Poland, Brussels, Ireland, and everything that's whiggish and disagreeable), and being constructed in a great measure from your hints and Tom's, it was for the most part approved; but they are in a hurry to get out the book, some varlet of a dissenting edition being now in possession of the public ear, with notes about as apt for Hooker as Voltaire's are for Pascal: for which reason they demur

to the enquiry into the genuineness of the last three books, which they think would take up too much time; and this I mind the less, as I am not sanguine in expecting to make anything out on the subject. Moreover, whoever ventures to question the said genuineness must be prepared to do mortal battle with Henry Hallam, Esq., of Constitutiono-Middle-Ageo celebrity; who I find fancies he has settled the matter in one round sentence. And this I take to be one reason why those cautious mortals decline the subject; though they say nothing about it. If one could make out anything, it might come in an additional volume, with a thorough good index; which, as things are, is more than they must expect. Now the drift of all this is, to tell you how much you will help me if you will only put down any historical matter which strikes you as useful to illustrate any passage. I say 'historical,' because I think that is what you will like best: but contributions in any other kind will be most thankfully received. Tom has begun an index to the Scripture quotations, and I am correcting the text, and verifying quotations as far as I have the means of doing here; also dividing the whole into paragraphs; this Tom has done long ago; and if we agree we shall think ourselves correct. As to 'the Christian Letter of certain English Protestants, with Hooker's MS. Notes,' which you wrongfully detain from Tom, and about which you keep such a determined Old Bailey sort of silence in your last epistle to me, I am disposed to think the best way will be to embody the valuable part of the said notes in our lower margin, as occasion may require. I quite agree with you on the desirableness of a general view of the Writers and Books against which Hooker had to write (and perhaps of those who preceded and immediately followed him in the controversy, Whitgift, Bridges, Covel,

Bancroft, &c.), but will *you* write it for us? I much fear it will be beyond our calibre. Well now, my dear Mrs. Dyson, I think you must be perfectly satisfied with the quantity of work we have assigned to that lazy Vicar of yours. I am not without hopes that the mere anticipation may serve as a saline draught to drive away his cold, and clear his head; but we shall be glad anyhow to know how he is going on."

I perceive towards the close of the same letter he indicates in a playful yet determined word his opinion upon the holding a living on the term of resigning it in favour of another—an opinion he had probably derived from Bishop Wilson, a great authority with him at all times,—and I will insert it in a parenthesis, though foreign to the present matter. He says, "I hear that Noel has been accepting a living to hold; please to bite him well when you write, there's a good Jerry."

From this time he was fairly engaged on the work; what assistance he received from Dyson from time to time I am not able to state specifically, though I do not doubt it was very valuable; but it is certain that from his brother, whose zeal in the matter was equal to his own, he received much, and important. But it was a work of years. The publication was not until 1836; and this could scarcely be otherwise, considering the absolute necessity he was under of frequent reference to public libraries, and the difficulty he experienced in leaving home for the purpose: this he never liked to do, and

scarcely ever did, unless his brother, or some intimate friend of his sister's, could take his place during his absence.

In the letter from which I have last extracted, he makes a free and playful allusion to Mr. Hallam, who had pronounced a clear opinion in favour of the authenticity of the three last books as we have them. It will be seen by Keble's Preface, that at last in substance, though not professedly, he did not shrink from "the mortal battle," which he speaks of, with that great authority. He was in possession of evidence, in particular as to the sixth book, which Mr. Hallam, it is clear, had never seen, and which was really all but demonstrative. To this, indeed, he yielded in later editions of his History. I must refer to Keble's Preface for a full account of this evidence, but this part of it may be shortly stated thus: —Hooker had sent the Sixth Book in manuscript to Cranmer and Sandys for their criticisms; they made and returned them; these shewed, both by the catch-words prefixed to nearly all the notes, and by their own tenor, that they were written upon a text different in itself, and on a different subject from the Sixth Book as we have it. But the controversy, if so it may be called, furnishes an instance how dangerous it is to rely in matters of this sort on conclusions drawn from intrinsic evidence only. Mr. Hallam says, "The intrinsic evidence arising from the work itself, on which in this branch of criticism I am

apt chiefly to rely, *seems altogether to repel every suspicion*[a]." Keble, to the credit of his critical acumen be it said, before he had seen the document to which I refer, "had always suspected" that other papers, which Hooker had left behind him, had been substituted for the genuine Sixth Book; "seeing it is so little to the purpose, the last fault with which one should suspect anything of his to be chargeable."

It will be worth while to trace him in his progress in this important work from his letters.

As early as July 6, 1831, writing to me from Fairford, after describing the difficulty under which he laboured as to leaving home, he communicates to me the discovery of the document I allude to above:—

"I have met with one thing in C.C.C. Library, which has proved to be more interesting than I expected, viz. some notes by Hooker's friends, Cranmer and Sandys, on the MS. 6th Book of the E. Polity, which he had sent to them to criticize. They are many of them merely verbal, but even those have their interest, not merely as reliques, but also from the sort of light they throw on the tempers of the three friends, and the terms on which they mutually were. But some few of them are full of matter and very sensible, and they prove to demonstration, I think, that the 6th Book, as we have it, is by no means R. H.'s; at least, if it be his, it is a mere collection from other papers, which he may have left, substituted for the genuine 6th Book. This I have always suspected, seeing it is so little to the pur-

[a] Constitutional History, vol. i. ch. iv. p. 237, 1st edit.

pose, the last fault with which one should suspect anything of his to be chargeable: and to my mind these papers entirely prove it."

On Oct. 29, 1832, writing to Dyson, he says :—

"Did I tell you that Cotton (of Ch. Ch.) is collating the Hooker MSS. in Dublin Coll., and pronounces them very valuable? Have you any friend in London who could help me at the State Paper Office? I think it possible there may be some correspondence about the latter years of Q. Eliz., which may throw light on the history of the book. Also how am I to find out what became of Lord Conway's Library, or Bp. Andrewes', or any other of the Libraries, which Isaak Walton mentions as having contained copies of the missing books. In consequence of Cotton's statements, the Delegates have allowed an indefinite time to go on with Hooker; which is very convenient, as I have only bits and snatches of time to employ on it."

In December, 1832, writing to Cornish, he says :—

"I don't seem able to tell you much of our old friends. Our *very* old friend Dick Hooker grows more slowly than one could have expected; the fault whereof I am willing to throw not so much on my own indolence as on Tom's occupations, which hinder him from coming here, and therefore hinder me from going to Oxford, and I am now at a point where I cannot get on without libraries."

On Dec. 3, 1834, he writes to me from Fairford :—

"As for Hooker he plods on, rather slow than sure: we are just now at the Athanasian Creed, i.e. not half through the 2nd volume. It would be pleasant work if one had the

command of libraries, but as I have been forced to do it by fits and snatches, it is anything but satisfactory."

In January, 1835, writing to Cornish, he says :—

"My friend Dick H. gets on much more slowly than I could wish. I am only as yet in the part about Baptism, in Book V. ; and let me advise you, as a friend, not to undertake editing Hooker, till you have read a good lot of the Fathers."

In August, 1835, writing to Froude, he says :—

"As for myself I am now all through Hooker, except about ½ a dozen references in some of the *Opuscula*, and must begin forthwith to discuss the Prælim. Dissertation, in which N. says I must give a view of Hooker's views. But this will go terribly against the grain ; and, indeed, I sometimes feel as though I were utterly incapable of it. Such is my feeling this very evening, owing in part, I imagine, to the oppressive drought and heat of the day : but I must set doggedly to work, if I can, to-morrow. I am more and more satisfied that Richard was in most things a middle term between Laud and Cranmer, but nearer the former ; and also that he was in a transition state when he was taken from us ; and there is no saying how much nearer he might have got to Laud, if he had lived twenty years longer. His notion of Regal, or rather State, power would rather have stood in the way, and so *perhaps* would his dislike to anything approaching to Justification by inherent grace. But in the great point of the Sacraments, as I conceive, he was almost or entirely with us ; if such an expression be not ludicrously presumptuous."

In Sept. 1835, he writes from Oriel to Dyson :—

"I have been plodding on with Hooker, and have at

last, after a sort, finished the notes, and begun the Editor's Preface, in which I am now got to the eighth Book, and therefore shall soon, I hope, have finished the critical part of it; but I am doubting whether or not to attempt a theological part, i.e. a kind of *precis* of Hooker's views on the great subjects; after the manner of those which the Benedictine Editors, I believe, adopt in their edition of the Fathers. Newman says I ought to add something of this sort; I doubt both my ability and my leisure, but one can but try; and it is a satisfaction to think, that if the trial fails, it is but putting so much of the MS. into the fire, and the rest will do."

Finally, on March 17, 1836, he tells Dyson:—

"I have this day sent my last sheet of the Hooker Preface to the press, i.e. the correction of it, so that nothing remains but the index, which will take a few days licking into shape; the matter of it is all ready: wish me joy of this, although I expect to be pelted with plenty of hot water, for certain views which I have given in the Preface."

I have thought it well to be thus minute as to his progress in this labour, and the difficulties which beset it. Its importance to the Church of England can scarcely be over-estimated. All will agree, I presume, in the advantage of having the text of this great work diligently collated with the best editions, briefly and carefully annotated, with a verification of the references, and made more conveniently readable by the breaking it up into numbered paragraphs and sections, with a running title of the chief

topics. No Father of the English Church has now had more justice done to him in all these respects and no one, I believe, more needed it, none more highly deserved it.

But it would have been discreditable to the University, if the Delegates, when they were reprinting Hooker, had limited the Editor, as it will have been seen was at first proposed, either as to the extent of his labours, or the time within which they were to be accomplished. They made an excellent choice of their editor; and although, it must be admitted, he tried their patience considerably, they made allowance for his difficulties, and never withdrew their confidence. In a series of English Classics which they are now printing, the first book of the "Ecclesiastical Polity" is rightly included, and I have had the pleasure of reading the masterly Introduction of the editor, Mr. Church: it seems clear from this that the lapse of thirty years has brought to light little, if any, new matter, and detected Keble in no substantial error. His edition, the Clarendon Edition, still remains, and probably will remain the standard one; and this is a distinction which Oxford cannot lightly afford to lose in regard to the works of her great son.

It has been seen how Keble speaks of his Preface; when one considers the difficulties under which he wrote it, it is a really astonishing work; and it shews how much knowledge, and in how many various

ways, he had not merely acquired, but assimilated and made his own. It was not to be expected that in one part of it he would please all parties in our unhappily divided Church; and it would be presumptuous in an ignorant person, as in these respects I am, to pronounce a judgment on the controversies he dealt with, or his account of the agents and movements in it. But looking on it only as a narrative, and as a piece of reasoning, I cannot suppress the feeling of satisfaction I have as an old Scholar of Corpus, that it fell to the lot of another Scholar of the same House to do this act of justice to the greatest name upon our list, and that he was enabled to do it so consummately.

# CHAPTER X.

PAIGNTON. — POETRY PROFESSORSHIP, AND LECTURES.—ASSIZE SERMON, 1833.—THE TRACTS.—DEATH OF MR. KEBLE.—1835.

I HAVE thought it better to set down in one place all that it seemed desirable for me to state in regard to the Edition of Hooker's works, and in so doing, I have necessarily departed from the order of time in my general narrative; to this I now return.

I am entirely indebted to the Memoir to which I have so often referred, for my knowledge of the particulars of the incident which I am about first to speak of, and I take the liberty of transcribing the passage [a]. Mr. Moor says :—

"In the year 1831, when Mr. Keble was living with his father at Fairford, the present Lord Bishop of Exeter offered to him the valuable and important living of Paignton in Devonshire, considering him even then to be 'the most eminently good man in the Church,' as his Lordship has

[a] I may state here that this Memoir is not, I believe, printed separately, but is included with other matters in a handsome volume published by Mr. Savage at Winchester, entitled "The Birth-place, Home, Churches, and other places connected with the Author of 'The Christian Year,' illustrated in Thirty-two Photographs." 2nd. Ed. 1867.

kindly informed the writer of this Memoir; adding that 'the conscientious scruple of the Patron, who had purchased that presentation, and who felt doubtful of the propriety of his acquiring Church patronage by such purchase,' made him feel it his 'duty to use the utmost caution in selecting a person to fill it.'"

Nothing could be more flattering than this offer, but the circumstances I have already stated, of which it is to be presumed the Bishop at the time was not aware, of course made the acceptance of it out of the question. In after life, when a warmer climate than that of Hursley, and close vicinity to the sea became necessary for Mrs. Keble's health, and very useful for his own, a residence on the shores of Torbay might have been very beneficial; but it is still impossible to regret that he could not accept Paignton.

In the same year he was without any opposition placed in the vacant chair of the Poetry Professorship. This is usually held by two successive elections for ten years, and when it was vacant in 1821, his friends were very anxious that he should be elected, nor was he indisposed to it; but as soon as he heard of the intention of the late Dean of St. Paul's to become a candidate, he would not permit his claim to be pressed. It would have been difficult to persuade him to be a candidate in any contested election; but Milman and he were on very friendly terms, and Keble felt that his talents, acquirements,

and distinction, entitled him to any honour of that kind which the University could confer.

Keble now was not without scruples as to his own qualifications for the office, and the passage I am about presently to cite from one of his letters seems to shew that a chance expression of mine, favouring, I fancy, his own disposition to undervalue himself, may have contributed to create, or increase these scruples. However they were wisely overcome. In December, 1831, dating from Fairford, he says to me:—

"I am not very particularly sanguine about this Professorship, to which my friends have been so kind as to nominate me; I feel as if the Latin wouldn't come; and what is worse, I have not yet come to any resolution on the subject to lecture on; if anything occurs to you, the smallest donation will be thankfully received. I imagine I don't begin 'till when I please in Lent Term.'"

It was perfectly well known when his predecessor's term of office would expire, but it should seem that Keble had thought so little of the succession, as to be still at sea as to the subject on which he would lecture, if elected. However he must have made up his mind without much delay, as he delivered his first lecture in February, 1832, and on the 13th of that month, in the letter to which I have already alluded, he gave me this account of his design for the whole course:—

"I was at Oxford the beginning of this week 'reading

in,'—it is uphill work to me, and you never said a much truer thing than when you told Tom I was ten years too old for the task. However, I must do my best now. My notion is, to consider Poetry as a vent for overcharged feelings, or a full imagination, and so account for the various classes into which Poets naturally fall, by reference to the various objects which are apt to fill and overpower the mind, so as to require a sort of relief. Then there will come in a grand distinction between what I call Primary and Secondary Poets; the first *poetising* for their own relief, the second for any other reason. Then I shall *βασανίζε*, one after another, each of the great Ancients, whom in my Royal Authority I think worthy of the name of a Primary Poet, and shew what class he belongs to, and what sort of a person I take him to have been. From which will arise certain conclusions as to the degree in which the interest of poetry depends on the character of the writer, as shewn in his works; and, again, as to the relation between this art, and practical goodness, moral and religious. In the whole affair, I *think* I have hit on the truth, and I expect to interest myself; but there my expectations pretty nearly terminate; and as to Latin, it will be *ἀγαπητόν*, if I do not disgrace myself. However, I do not like the notion of making it English, even if the Doctors would allow it; because of the moral certainty of a large importation of trash, which ought not to be on the University account; and also because I think Latin would suffer more than Poetry would gain."

I venture here to remind my readers of the letter to Froude of September, 1825, from which I have made an extract, in which he speaks of "The Christian Year," and glancing at this Theory of Poetry,

shews that it was not only then in his mind, but that, in fact, that Collection of Poems had grown up under its influence.

In May, 1832, writing to me from Fairford, he says :—

"My Lectures have hindered me sadly in my Hooker, neither thoughts nor words will come neatly as I wish. But I am more and more satisfied that my theory in itself, *as far as it goes*, (for it is not so absurd as to pretend to explain all phenomena,) is a good, and useful, and true one. The point I am now upon is making out what people mean when they talk of the Poetry of Painting, of Music, of Sculpture, &c. ; if you know of any good book on the subject, it will be a charity to mention it. But after all, I believe the best way, especially in Latin, is to make the most one can of some one or two popular examples."

Since I undertook the task I have in hand, I have thought it right to refresh my memory as to the *Prælectiones*, and have read them through again with attention. I must say, in the first place, that I entirely retract the observation that he was ten years too old when he was elected to the Professorship ; he was not in my opinion a day too old. I presume I must have been thinking principally of the Latinity, and no doubt the ten years' disuse added much to the difficulty of which he complains, and the danger which he feared. I will not presume to pass the judgment of a scholar on his Latinity, but I may venture to say that while there is no affectation of Ciceronianism, nay, while you sensibly miss the inimitable rhythm and roundness of the

great Master's periods, Keble seems to me almost always to have what is after all of the highest value, a sufficient command of the instrument he is using. The common failing of modern Latinists, those especially who covet most to be Ciceronians, is that they trim their conceptions, and limit their thoughts to suit their powers of expression; they do not so much write what they think in all its extent, as set down what they can find apt clothing for in Ciceronian language; as if one should omit the operations of the artillery in describing a modern fight, because Cicero supplied no word for a cannon. Keble never falls into this error; he always says, and with sufficient clearness too, what he wishes to say, and never leaves anything unsaid from want of words to express it in. But, passing from the language to the matter, the subject he chose demanded a full-grown man for its exponent, one who could bring forth "things new and old" from his storehouse, and who without presumption might claim to speak with authority. The ten years of interval between the two Elections had been to him years of mental enrichment, ripening, and consolidation; yet had not diminished, perhaps increased, his conscientious consideration of what he might say, and the modesty which was an inseparable part of his whole nature. They had been years too of considerable progress and activity generally in poetic and artistic studies; in this he had participated, and he had seen more of nature, and studied her intensely with a true

poet's feeling. Moreover attentive readers will not fail to perceive that all through his analyses of poems and his criticisms, and especially through the hortatory parts of the Lectures, there run the golden threads of a religious spirit; never obtrusively, never patchily manifested, but uniformly, and as it were imperceptibly shedding a mellowness and glow of colour over the whole texture. Certainly he had the feeling, which was the source of this, in 1821 equally as in 1831; but I think it came out with more grace, consistence, and power, with the years added to his course. Such a man, especially one so diffident of himself, would be able to say at the latter age what he might perhaps have shrunk from saying, or said with less authority at the former.

The late Professor, Mr. Arnold, with somewhat of hereditary boldness, cast off the yoke of a foreign language, and defied Keble's prophecy, which for himself he might safely do; and he came to the office in a different state of the public mind, and under an altered constitution of the University.

I may, however, freely express my hope that his successors will revert to the ancient practice of selecting a subject, and giving a course upon it, which shall form an entire and complete work. It seems to me to let down the office, and to be a great temptation to clever and ready men, who may shrink from sustained labour, and the mental effort of grasping all parts of a great subject, to make the Terminal Lectures opportunities for delivering

merely brilliant essays, which find their not inappropriate future in fashionable Serials. The Poetry Professorship is a great office, and ought to exercise a sensible influence on the national taste. Great subjects will never be wanting, at least, we have at present a long list of such unexhausted. Chaucer, and the early English Poets,—Shakespere, and the Elizabethan Dramatists,—Spenser, Milton, Dryden, and Pope,—Wordsworth—occur at once. And if our own poets failed, the great Italian and German masters might be taken up. These, and such as these, are noble subjects, which would tax the intellect, the learning, and the industry of great minds. Thoroughly to inform the English mind on these, and to educate its taste in regard to such models, would be not merely to reflect credit on the University, but to confer wide and lasting benefit on the nation.

Whether Keble could have done as Mr. Arnold did, without permission of the governing body, and if that were necessary, whether he would have obtained it, I do not know; but I do regret extremely that the Lectures were not originally composed in English; and it is a great gain that, as I presume, all future Professors will follow Mr. Arnold's example in this respect. We boast nationally of our Scholarship, and there is no doubt for a Scholar much pleasure in composing, and not a little in reading good modern Latin; but after all to write in Latin is to write for readers comparatively so

few, that when we do so, we may be said almost to seal up our thoughts from the public. But the Professor of Poetry at Oxford has a duty of a popular character; he has not indeed to make poets, or even scholars, but to improve poetical taste, to regulate critical judgment, to enlarge and systematize knowledge as to the great poems of the world, and all this demands the freedom of a native language both for the lecturer, the audience, and readers. Mr. Gladstone has happily characterized the *Prælectiones* in one point of view, when he calls the course a "*refined* work," and he has truly said that it "criticises the Homeric Poems in the spirit of a bard, setting an early example, at least to England, of elevating the tone of Homeric study[b]." One regrets to think that such a book on such a subject should not be accessible, without difficulty as to the language, to every educated woman as well as man.

It may be said, Why not translate it? a question natural enough to be asked, before one has considered the difficulty of making any Latin book into an original, idiomatic English book, enhanced in the present instance by the vast number of citations, of which translations would have to be made or found. Yet the purpose was floating for a long time in Keble's mind, and if any one could do such a work successfully, it would be the author of the original, as he might properly indulge in modifications or alterations not allowable to a third

[b] Homer, vol. iii. p. 374.

person. More than once I believe I was myself tempted by my fondness for the work, and my opinion of its possible usefulness in an English dress, to offer my services; he answered me thus on July 5, 1844:—

"I never thanked you for your partial pat on the back touching the *Prælectiones*. I have sometimes thought whether any kind of translation or adaptation might be useful, though of course no such vision ever crossed my mind as one of Her Majesty's Puisne Judges engaged in such an operation. If *it took no time*, I should like to substitute modern examples for the Greek and Latin."

This substitution might have been effected; and very usefully, where the example is used only to illustrate some general position in the text; but in far the greater number, where the Greek or Latin Poem is the special subject of remark, that and the example are necessarily so wedded together, that it would have been impracticable. However, the notion was not wholly abandoned, and in March, 1847, in answer to some proposition from me, he writes thus:—

"I am really sorry not to have thanked you sooner for your kind thought about the *Prælectiones*, but I would not for a very great deal have your energies and scanty leisure wasted on anything so very unworthy. If they are at all likely to do any good in English, it must be, I think, by some reform more radical than any translation; and if I were industrious enough ever to have a little leisure, I should encourage a thought, which has sometimes come

into my mind, of Anglicizing the substance of the poor book in a kind of dialogues, which might be touched up with a little scenery, and made semi-dramatic. But it would take a good deal of time and trouble, especially as I suppose modern examples must be substituted in many cases for the classical ones; and then it will be matter of many a weary chase to hunt out the fugitive glimmer of a meaning, which may or may not be lurking in the folds of a long Latin sentence. What a prose I am getting into."

One cannot but regret that he never found time to carry into effect this last idea, suggested to him probably by Southey's Colloquies. It is easy to see how the work would have lent itself to lively discussion in dialogue. He was powerful in local descriptions in prose and verse, and at this period of his life he had seen a great deal of beautiful country; but even if he had confined himself to the scenery at and about Hursley, with every nook and alley of which he was familiar, he would have found scenes enough for his purpose, which he would have stamped thenceforward with indelible associations.

Will my readers forgive me if, upon a favourite subject, I venture to add an extract from my answer to his last letter, which I have found among my returned letters:—

"If you can accomplish *your* design with the Lectures, it will be indeed excellent; and now you have surmised such a thing, I shall not let you rest without putting it in

execution. But I think you will not only incur unnecessary labour, but very much impair the general utility of the book, and also interfere with its peculiar character, by seeking for modern instances. How can you sponge out Homer, Achilles, &c., without making it a new work, and at the same time destroying the happy peculiarity which your book would have of at once teaching a true and novel theory of Poetry, and illustrating it from the Classic Poets. Sprinkle here and there, if you will, modern examples, without confining yourself to English poetry for them, but make your present instances *the staple;* print the originals with translations, which last I should without scruple *adapt* from the best I could find, altering wherever I liked, so as to make them reflect the very matter, for which I had selected the originals. And as the passages are not very long, this would not be so troublesome as it might seem; and you would do them in your walks, and at all odd times. In this way your argument and stuff being already provided, I think you would find the work not very laborious, and full of interest. Your scheme of dialogue and scenery is excellent; it is long since I read Southey's Colloquies, but I remember how the framing of the pictures there interested me. Euge-macte.

"*March* 5, 1847."

It was not to be; singularly enough the subject was renewed so late as January, 1866, when he was at Bournemouth, by an offer made to him by a gentleman who was a stranger to him. He consulted me about it, and reminded me of what had passed between us on the subject many years before, and asked if I still retained my former notion

of undertaking it myself; but the time for such things with me had passed away.

No short analysis of the work, (and a very short one only would be suitable here,) would give so true an account in general of its plan, as that which I have already cited from his own letter.

The peroration of the series so illustrates the spirit of the whole, that I am tempted to give it, and "done into English;" though I fear this may prove too clearly the justice of Keble's reluctance to entrust me as his translator. Something grandiose must be allowed for in a peroration.

"This would I desire most earnestly to deliver and commend to the thoughts of our young men, that it will be well with the pursuit of Poetry so long only as her lovers shall remember that she is a gift vouchsafed to man, to minister as a specially honourable handmaid to true piety; so that they should serve her, not in word, but in deed and in truth, with all reverence, constancy, chasteness of spirit. On these, indeed, will depend entirely the hope, which at length we dare conceive for the future, that that grander and loftier voice of Poetry, which now for several years hath been heard among us, shall have good end and issue, through the happy increase of those studies which are peculiarly and properly termed Divine.

"May God, Best and Greatest, vouchsafe that if He shall haply have ordained for us so great a blessing, it may not in the very smallest particular fail, and be of none effect through the fault of any one of us."

I have noticed in passing the interest which Keble

took in public affairs, as they concerned the labouring classes; his faith, for so I must call it, as regarded the Church, and his opinions in respect of the two parties which have divided her ever since the Reformation, have also appeared incidentally in the course of my narrative. With him these interests were living realities: gentle as he was by nature, and loving-hearted to individuals, he was very sensitive in regard to them, and it was not in his nature, nor according to his conscience, to be inactive when he felt deeply. He was appointed by the Vice-Chancellor to preach the Summer Assize Sermon at Oxford in 1833; he was glad of the opportunity, and he published his sermon with the title of National Apostasy, his text being the noble declaration of Samuel as to the course which he will continue to pursue in regard to his countrymen, when they insisted on renouncing their Theocracy, and on being governed by a king, as the Gentiles were. Among other things the measures then in progress in regard to the Irish Protestant Church, which had ended before the publication of the Sermon in what I scarcely think he accurately termed the *suppression* of ten bishoprics, moved him very deeply; and his Sermon, though the language is measured, and the recommendations, such as most Churchmen would approve of, is evidently written under deep though suppressed emotion of heart.

I may state while I am noticing this Sermon, that

in it he lays down as the ground on which he thinks the events in Jewish history applicable to Christian teaching, the principle which my readers will remember him to have stated in a letter I have before extracted from. He says, "As regards reward and punishment, God dealt formerly with the Jewish people in a manner analogous to that in which He deals now, not so much with Christian nations, as with the souls of individual Christians."

We have long as a Nation passed by Keble's principles in these matters, and I am not about uselessly to re-agitate them, but I have made this particular mention of the Sermon, because out of the same feelings, and about the same time, arose that concerted and systematic course of action, of which the first-fruits were the celebrated Tracts. Dr. Newman says in his *Apologia*, that he has ever considered and kept the day of the publication of the Sermon as the start of the religious movement of 1833.

I have prepared my readers not to expect in this memoir the history of that movement. But one who ought to know, has said in regard to it, that John Keble was its true and primary author, and I shall therefore supply such personal and incidental mention of it as my means enable me.

Writing to Dyson on the 26th of August, 1833, very shortly after the preaching and publication of the Sermon, he says :—

"If I had not hoped to see you so soon, I should have

sent you, I think, what I now reserve for you, if you will accept it, a sermon which I have ventured to preach and publish; and at the same time I should have asked you, What think you of a kind of association (as quiet and unpretending as may be, if possible even without a name) for the promotion of these two objects? first, the circulation of primitive notions regarding the Apostolical Succession, &c.; and secondly the protection of the Prayer-book against profane innovation. We have as yet only written round to a very few intimate friends, Davison, Ogilvie, Tom, &c., and as far as they have answered me yet, they seem to think it may do good. To give you a notion of the kind of thing, the first Tract we propose to print will be a *Penny* account of the martyrdom of St. Ignatius, with extracts from his Epistles. *Pray* do not blow on it as being all Ultra."

In the same month, and a few days earlier, writing to his father's old friend, Mr. Richards, he says:—

"Some of my friends at Oxford, persons worthy of much confidence, are wishing for a kind of association, to circulate right notions on the Apostolical Succession, and also for the defence of the Prayer-book against any sort of profane innovation, which seems too likely to be attempted. Might we hope for your countenance and support if such a thing should be set on foot? Isaac Williams, I think, has been written to, and can give you all particulars about it. I cannot help hoping that there is still a good deal of cordial Church feeling about the country, which it is very desirable to encourage in a quiet way, and to get people to dwell on it a little more."

In October, 1833, writing to me, he says:—

"Dyson and I had a great deal of talk on a plan

which he may have mentioned to you, and which at any rate I must,—the more boldly as you speak so kindly of the tone and temper of the sermon I sent you. Considering the helpless state of the Church in England, and the very inadequate ideas entertained by most of her children, lay and clerical, of her claims on their allegiance, certain intimate friends of mine at Oxford have drawn up a paper or two, of which I hope you will in a day or two receive certain copies through the Parson of Plymtree, who has promised to convey them so far. Now if you approve and would like to assist us, give me one line to say so within this fortnight; and put down and send me at your leisure any memoranda that may occur to you of the best and most effectual way of proceeding, e.g. on what subjects tracts may be usefully provided, either for the clergy or the laity, what you hear said against us that you think deserves notice, in the way either of amendment or justification, whom you think we might serviceably apply to," &c.

Such was the original design of the small knot of zealous Churchmen, who projected this celebrated series of Tracts.

It is impossible to impute disloyalty, or a mischievous intention concealed under the avowed design, or in the means adopted to promote it; those who will read in Dr. Newman's *Apologia* the names of the parties concerned, will never, I am persuaded, think that the real object or means were other than those avowed. Names more free from question as to their general honesty, and their unquestionable loyalty to the Church of England, could scarcely be found. Still both imprudence in the execution, and

an advance upon the original purpose are possible; matters to be considered hereafter. For myself, I had not, or fancied I had not, leisure at the time to read many of the Tracts as they came out, nor have I read them at any time since; a predicament in which I believe to stand a large number of those who have borne the name of Tractarians, as well as of those who have objected to them as mischievous. From the letters I have seen, I find that the bishops were not invited to sanction, or interfere in the movement in the way of regulation; good reasons may be assigned for this resolution, beyond the caution of one individual, from which however I believe it proceeded; although Keble, I think, would simply and heartily have invoked the countenance and influence of the Fathers of the Church; from similar motives a too careful or rather a formal organization was avoided, and this perhaps, under the circumstances, was to be regretted; when every move would be so vigilantly watched, and when a false move might be so prejudicial.

It is, in my opinion, mere prejudice to deny that the cause of true religion, and of the Church of England, reaped great advantages from the circulation of the Tracts; one must have been a quiet and attentive observer of the state of the parochial clergy, and of the English Church generally before they issued, to be a competent judge of this. Making every allowance for exaggeration, the change for the better is great,

and to be observed not so much in bright instances here and there, as in the general tone of feeling and conduct, in the higher appreciation of what the profession requires of its members, and the larger and more distinct acknowledgment of duty. In these respects I think it may be said, comparing the two periods, that the rule has become the exception, the exception the rule. But it will be equally prejudice, as it seems to me, to deny that incidentally some evil flowed from them. I remember on occasion of some early secessions to Rome, it was reported to have been said by Dr. Pusey, that however much he regretted it, he could not deny that some were to be anticipated,—it was a sensible remark, if I may be allowed to say so. The Tracts came at a time when we were (speaking of the generality both lay and clerical) wholly untrained in dogmatic theology, wholly unversed in the questions which lay between the Roman and the English branches of Christ's Church. Elderly men will remember the time, when for students to go into the controversy with Rome was thought nearly superfluous, and for clergymen to preach on it a mere waste of time. The Tracts stirred this tranquil, perhaps stagnant, lake; and the stir of men's minds, especially among the younger and more ardent, naturally produced enquiry, under circumstances not at all favourable to a just result; the imperfect practice, and the theory in some instances not strictly logical or com-

plete of our Church, were arraigned without that diffident reverence, or that due allowance for circumstances, which might have been reasonably expected; and there was the crowning fallacy, "if not England, then Rome;" on behalf of which latter every assumption was made.

I am far from saying that this explains every instance of secession; certainly, as at the Reformation great men of unimpeachable holiness, vast learning, and powerful intellect, remained with Rome, so now some few of whom no less can be said went to her: such is the character of the controversy in which Bellarmine and Andrewes are opposed champions, that this must in all time be expected.

But after all, and now that one can look back in comparative calm on the movement, I believe that its general effect on the Church, in its clergy as well as laity, often to be seen operating on those who are least conscious of it, and least willing to acknowledge it, must be pronounced a subject for the deepest gratitude to its Great Head.

Keble's direct contributions to the Tracts were few; in a list of his writings to be seen in Mr. Savage's work, p. 52, four Tracts only are set down as his, Nos. 4, 13, 40, 89[c], and I am not aware that to anything in either could objection be made by any critic with ordinary

[c] To these I find now on the best authority ought to be added, Nos. 52, 54, 57, 60, four Sermons on four Saints' Days. These on the same authority were to have been parts of a course.

pretensions to Churchmanship. The series is now unwisely and undeservedly consigned to such entire oblivion, that it may be as well to state shortly the subjects of these four. No. 4, is an argument in the manner of Butler, Keble's favourite mode of reasoning, to shew that adherence to the Apostolical Succession is the safest course. No. 13, is on the Principle which regulated the Selection of the Sunday Lessons. I think he owed the original suggestion of this to Miller, as I find him stating it in one of his letters, in which he speaks of a visit from Miller, and the conversations they had had together. At the present time the Lectionary of the Prayer-book is coming it is said under the revision of a Royal Commission, and it may therefore not be wrong respectfully to urge his caution; that before fault is found with the present selection, those who alter it "ought to be tolerably certain that they understand the principle on which the Lessons in general were selected." It is to be observed that he is speaking only of the Sunday Lessons; and as to the First Lessons, his theory is an application of that which I have mentioned before as a favourite one with him, "that the arrangers desired to exhibit God's former dealings with His chosen people *collectively*, and the return made by them to God, in such manner as might best illustrate His dealing with each *individual* chosen now to be in His Church, and the snares and temptations most apt to beset us as Christians." This was an argument which of course was applicable only to the

First Lessons on Sundays; but he fails not to assign ingenious reasons for there being no selection for the Second Lessons; one of the advantages which he finds in this is, "that it presents the Old and New Scriptures in endless variety of mutual combinations, the more striking because they are unforeseen, and in a certain sense casual." "The thought," he goes on to say, "is happily expressed by Herbert, thus addressing Holy Scripture:—

> "'O that I knew how all thy lights combine
> And the configurations of their glory:
> Seeing not only how each verse doth shine
> But all the constellations of the story.'"

He had referred to this stanza in the letter to which I have just alluded. It will interest those who should be induced to read this Tract, to collect from it indirectly, how diffused and how earnest at the same time was the attention which he gave to every part, the most ordinary as well as the most rarely recurring, of his duty.

In the Tracts are several entitled "Richard Nelson;" these are dialogues, in which a mason by that name bears a principal part with the clergyman of his parish on different religious questions then much agitated; they are very pleasantly written, and afford good specimens of the manner in which information on grave subjects may successfully be conveyed to the middle classes of our people. The subject of No. 40 is the marriage of Nelson's ne-

phew and godson, whose father is dead, to a young woman who has not been baptized, and of course is not a member of our Church. Nelson is much opposed to this as well as the clergyman; the argument, therefore, is not a contentious one, and to the spirit of the present day it would seem to relate to a very old-world matter; yet I will own it has interested me in reading it over again, and it can never be out of season, I suppose, to read what tends to elevate and sanctify that which the Church calls the state of Holy Matrimony.

One of the points in which Arnold and Keble differed very widely was in their general estimation of the Fathers. It was not unnatural that Arnold should have a quick eye for occasional looseness in argument, and the absence of that critical judgment in history which may almost be said to have only come into being since the death of the latest on the roll. But Arnold had not (indeed how should he have acquired?) the extensive knowledge of them which Keble had, and he was scarcely competent to set a due estimate on the scriptural feeling, and habit of reasoning for which they are remarkable, or the weight of their direct, and perhaps even more their indirect, testimony on the belief and practice of the early Church. Keble had had time, which Arnold with all his wonderful industry and quickness of apprehension had not, for a general and very considerate study of them; it had been his duty as the editor of Hooker to deepen that study, and while

perhaps he might a little underrate the importance of those defects on which Arnold insisted, he dwelt with just admiration and gratitude on their merits. His was a nature, too, in this respect directly opposed to Arnold's, and he loved the study, which Arnold perhaps too much despised.

No. 89 was the result of this, an Essay on the Mysticism attributed to the Early Fathers of the Church, and I cannot but regret that it remains a fragment only.

Such were Keble's direct contributions to the Tracts, which I have thought it right to mention in detail; but it is not to be doubted that his interference in regard to them went much further, not merely in suggesting subjects, and reviewing the essays of others, but in personal influence elsewhere than in Oxford, in procuring contributions, and extending the circulation; this, however, it will be more in order to notice when I come to the period of the abrupt termination of the series in 1841.

He seems to have been fully occupied between home and Oxford during the year 1834, — with Hooker, and his Lectures, and the other duties of the Professorship; he was also at this time busy with the version of the Psalms, of which I delay to speak until its completion. Towards the close of the year it was evident that the object of his tender care for so many years was about to be removed from him; his father's infirmities had compelled him to take to his bed in November:—

"For a bed-ridden person of 89" (he writes to me on the 3rd of December) "he is I trust no very great sufferer; he has infirmities, which give him often a good deal of pain and distress, but he sleeps a good deal; his appetite is tolerable, and he seems to have no thought but that which one would wish to be taken up with. Elisabeth has been able to do much for him."

Elisabeth, writing to a friend, says:—

"We have every comfort in seeing, and you will have the same in hearing, that the same peace of mind and trust in God still attend him in the near approach of death, as have been his comfort through life; he sleeps a great deal, and wakes to repeat prayers and psalms, and it seems to us who stand by, that he is only uncomfortable when his attention is called away from that happy world towards which we trust he is approaching."

To Mr. Richards Keble writes:—

"Whether wandering (which is the case occasionally) or collected, I may almost say that what comes out of his lips is one continued prayer."

The venerable patriarch fell asleep on the 24th of January, 1835, closing his blameless life in peace, with his family and faithful servants all around him:—

"His memory for prayers and psalms," says Keble, "did not desert him all through his illness, and it was remarkable how he made out the prayer, when he could not exactly remember it, by adding the words of some other prayer, hardly ever becoming incoherent, and always in the same clear silver voice."

As on all the preceding occasions, so on this, the survivors accepted the bereavement with the cheerful resignation of real Christians; they found comfort in all the circumstances of the illness, and the departure. Yet on John Keble, and Elizabeth especially, the blow was heavy; to them their father had long been the object of tenderest care; their ardent love for him (no distinction can be made between the two) had a mixture in it of filial pride, and veneration for his great qualities of head and heart; the feeling naturally descended to smaller matters,—John delights to speak of "his silver voice," "the clear and peculiar tones of his voice," and how in advanced old age the flock at Coln admired his manner still of performing the duty; and now they two were bereft of that object, and alone.

Yet as at his mother's death all his usual cheerfulness and readiness for duty were what the standers by would have noticed. My readers will see no inconsistency in this: an incident has come to my knowledge since I spoke of his mother's death, which is worth introducing here; it was told me by one who was present when it occurred. Keble returned, it will be remembered, from his mother's death-bed to the Schools at Oxford, and continued in the discharge of his duty as Examining Master through the week until the day of her funeral. A young man had given in among his books some plays of Euripides, including the Alcestis. Keble happened to

be conducting his examination; and whether inadvertently, or, as we sometimes do, humouring the sorrow at his heart, had set him on at the part, (ver. 395 *et seqq.*,) in which she dies in the presence of her husband Admetus, her son Eumelus, and his sister. Much of the tenderness and pathos of the passage arise from the wonderful simplicity of the language, which it is almost impossible to reproduce in a translation; but I think my readers will be glad to see the passages in a rendering, which my son, Mr. Coleridge, has been good enough to supply me with:—

ADMETUS, ALCESTIS, CHORUS, EUMELUS.

ADMETUS. Turn thy face hither; leave not thy children so.
ALCESTIS. Not with my will; yet fare ye well, my babes.
ADM. Look, look upon them!
ALC. I am nothing now.
ADM. What? goest thou?
ALC. Farewell.
ADM. Let me die too!

CHORUS. Thy wife hath past away, she is no more.

EUM. Ah, for my fate! To shades below,
My father, see my mother go!
She is no more beneath the sun,
Leaving me here my race to run,
An orphan boy, till life be done;
Ah, see her stiffening eyelids!
Look at her nerveless hands!
Hear me, oh hear, sweet mother,
The child who o'er thee stands.

I call to thee, my mother, yea, I call;
A callow nestling on thy lips I fall.
ADM. She hears thee not, nor sees thee; thus am I
And ye two smitten down with heaviest sorrow.
EUM. Ah, father! I am left alone,
So young, forlorn of mother's care,
The harsh things of the world to bear;
Thou, maiden, too my lot must share,
My sister! for her love is gone.
Father! all vain
The nuptial strain;
In vain her bridegroom didst thou stand,
Hoping in vain that hand in hand,
With her thou might'st attain old age,
The bourne of earthly pilgrimage.
For, she first withering, in her swift decay
The whole house perished as she past away.

Keble, as was then usual, was standing; he heard the passage out with fixed attention, and unchanged countenance, then dropped on his chair, and burying his face in his hands on the table, remained for some time silent, overcome with emotion.

# CHAPTER XI.

COLN ST. ALDWYN. — ENGAGEMENT WITH MISS CLARKE.—ACCEPTANCE OF HURSLEY VICARAGE. —MARRIAGE, AND SETTLEMENT AT HURSLEY.—VISITATION SERMON. — HURRELL FROUDE'S REMAINS.—A. KNOX.—VERSION OF PSALMS.—CREWEIAN ORATION AND WORDSWORTH.—1839.

KEBLE and his sister had cast in their lot together, and were now left with the world before them. I do not know what the disposition of the family property was, but no thought seems to have occurred to them of continuing at Fairford. One discomfort there had been during all his long residence there, felt even while his father and mother lived, and important enough to have decided him now of itself against choosing it as his residence when his choice was free; the views of the Incumbent in Church matters were of the kind to which he was very averse, and he felt that between himself and this gentleman there could be no cordial co-operation. Most of us, I suppose, would feel such a circumstance to be one which would mar the perfect enjoyment of any residence, however delightful in itself, or endeared to us by circumstances; with one who felt so strongly on these points as he did, it would be conclusive.

But with both the brother and sister Coln St. Aldwyn had always been the favourite residence; it was a great delight to them when the family moved, as they sometimes did, for a fortnight or three weeks to the Cottage Parsonage at Coln. I do not remember ever to have seen the place, but the photographs, three in number, devoted to it in Mr. Savage's work, create a favourable impression of the church, and of the river scenery. Keble delighted in walking on the banks of rivers, and no features or incidents of natural scenery does he describe in poetry more faithfully and imaginatively than those with which rivers, and their banks, the flow of their waters, their flowers, and their trees abound. In the chapter which these photographs illustrate are some citations from "The Christian Year" and the *Lyra Innocentium*, which the writer seeks to trace to the Coln. It is probable that he does so correctly; the whole chapter is interesting. Keble had a special, a sort of filial fondness for this river. Writing to his brother in June, 1815, on his return from some summer expedition, he says:—

"I got to Bibury about ½ p. 6, and walked leisurely home, and really some of the spots which I passed on our jolly river Coln are quite beautiful enough to recompence one for a much longer walk."

I was not surprised to see him date from Coln St. Aldwyn's soon after his father's death. I had hoped

to meet him at Oxford on my first Circuit as Judge; he says:—

"Very much disappointed am I that I cannot have the pleasure of meeting you at Oxford this week. I fixed my Lecture on purpose for last Tuesday, intending to stay all the week, but I had quite forgotten that it was the first week in Lent, when I could not well be absent from the parish; so I was obliged to mount my horse and ride home on Tuesday evening. After all, I imagine I should only have had very scanty fits and snatches of you, and that I shall be better off on the whole by considering this disappointment as a good excuse for coming up to London and spending a few days with you, and the Museum, some time after the Circuit is over. At present I cannot look forward with any great certainty to my own movements, for this vicarage is not yet disposed of, and I do not like leaving the people till they have some one to take care of them. It will be with a heavy heart most likely when I do go.....

"I think it likely that I shall continue bobbing backwards and forwards between Oxford and this place till after Easter, and then probably come to Oxford for the whole Term to look after my professional duties, and, as I hope, put Hooker fairly out of hand. Eliz. by that time, I dare say, will be reconciled to moving on Bisley for a while."

They did not in fact leave the little vicarage until June, and left it with much regret; it was like a second loss of their father to quit for ever the home and the church, where the recollections of him from their earliest childhood were so deeply impressed, where they might still seem to see his venerable countenance, and hear the clear tones of

his silver voice in the discharge of his duty. I need not say that the day of their departure was a sad one for the villagers; far the greater number of them had grown up under the care of the old man; his children had always identified themselves with him in visiting and loving carefulness for the sick and poor; these, and cordial assistance in the schools, and latterly Keble's ministrations there, had endeared them to the whole population.

They returned to Fairford to prepare for their final departure, and about the same time two events occurred, which determined the course of his whole future life; his engagement with Miss Charlotte Clarke, and his acceptance of the Vicarage of Hursley, again offered to him by Sir William Heathcote. The engagement, indeed, had been made some years before. None could be more natural: they had known each other well from childhood; their parents were old and intimate friends, and the marriage of the sister of the one with the brother of the other must have added to the familiarity of their intercourse. At first sight the only wonder would be that the announcement and fulfilment should have been so long delayed; but, on the one hand, Mrs. Clarke, a widow, was loath to part with her daughter, and Keble, on the other, was very unwilling to leave his father, and so from year to year the marriage was delayed.

Perhaps it might have been expected that his very intimate friends would have been let into his secret

earlier. His communications, when at last they came, to Cornish, to Dyson, and myself, were characteristic; and when I read them over now, I cannot help recalling to mind his exquisite verses on the Fourth Sunday in Lent:—

"But there's a sweeter flower than e'er
Blush'd on the rosy spray—
A brighter star, a richer bloom
Than e'er did western heaven illume
At close of summer day.

"'Tis Love, the last best gift of Heaven;
Love, gentle, holy, pure;
But tenderer than a dove's soft eye,
The searching sun, the open sky,
She never could endure."

To me he said, writing on the 4th of May:—

"As for me, I don't like talking of such reports so soon after our great loss, but surely you have a right to know all about me, and I will not affect to deny that I hope they may prove true in time; but I am sorry to say that I cannot speak highly of the health of the dear person in question, and that alone is a reason for not talking much about things."

To Cornish, from Fairford on the 12th of June, he writes in the same way:—

"I dare say Hubert has told you about me, and therefore I am not going to make a regular announcement, but only to beg your blessing as *young* people ought on such an occasion; but so shortly after my dear Father's death,

I do not much love being forward in telling my friends about things, and this I hope you will take as a receipt in full for all apologies due from me on the score of un friendly silence."

I give the letter to Dyson in full:—

"FAIRFORD,
"*June* 12, 1835.

"MY DEAR DYSON,

"I must allow, without any violent exertion of humility, that Mrs. Dyson, this time, has some ground of complaint in respect of the word 'soon.' And yet, considering how wonderfully quick the weeks and months move when once folk are got to our time of life, I hope she will make allowances. But as touching the news, (if uncertain futurities can be called news,) which Sir John communicated to you, I am not going to be coy, nor to argue against the propriety of such things, *as a friend of mine did in Yorkshire some years ago;* but only to say that whereas it is a project of some standing, I hope you will not think it any unkindness that nothing was said to you before; for surely, if any one out of the family, you and Mrs. D. have a right to be told of things; but you see it was all so very uncertain and contingent, and seemed somehow so made to depend on what of course we did not like to think of, that one could hardly say it had assumed the shape of a project; and since my Father's departure the time has been full short for talking of such things; and I dare say you will agree with me that few things not immoral are more disagreeable than the hurry people now-a-days are generally in to get out of the house of mourning. Well, now hoping I am forgiven, I proceed with the plans and projects. First

comes the melancholy reality that we are finally parted from dear little Coln.

"I think Elisabeth has behaved very well considering; but what with the hot weather, what with the packing up, and what with the people coming in to say good-bye one after another, the two or three days last past have been very trying to her, and I shall be rather glad to-morrow evening to think of her safely landed at Bisley. Our nephew has been with us all the time, and has been of the greatest use to her as well as enjoyment. When she starts West, I start East, having to visit Oxford for as long a spell as I can, to finish my Term's work, and break the back of the 3rd vol. of R. H., which is now in the press. At Michaelmas I have engaged at last to accept the Vicarage of Hursley, which Gilbert Heathcote is desirous of vacating. This house will probably be let to Cornwall, who, as you may remember, is our Doctor at Fairford, for a term of years. He wishes for it, and I suppose there is no person at all likely to seek it whom my Father, if we could ask him, would more desire to have here. Dearest E. will spend her time between me and Tom. My notion is Hursley in the winter for her, and Bisley in the summer. The distance is the great objection. . . . ."

Mr. Heathcote's health had failed very seriously at Hursley, and he was desirous of resigning the living. Sir William again and immediately offered it to Keble, who agreed to accept it, and it was arranged that he should come to it at the Michaelmas following; he was not in fact instituted until March 9, 1836. It is at least a remarkable circumstance, that Keble should have become the Incum-

bent of Hursley after the circumstances which have been stated; he had obeyed the calls of a sacred duty; these were now satisfied, and the vacancy was announced exactly at the time when, with the prospect of marriage before him, he must have been considering where he should settle down as a married man. And I believe that even with the objection to which he alludes at the close of my last extract from his letter to Dyson, (the distance from Hursley to Bisley, not great in itself, but inconvenient in days when there were no railways, to two busy clergymen, with not overflowing means,) Hursley was, of all the incumbencies he had known of, the one he would have most delighted to be placed in.

The marriage took place at Bisley on the 10th of October, 1835, and the newly-married couple went to Southampton, where they remained, I believe, until they took possession of the parsonage at Hursley. Southampton was convenient from its vicinity, and it was thought favourable for Mrs. Keble's health. Keble, it will be remembered, had mentioned in his announcement to me the delicacy of her health; this reason always for care, and too frequently for anxiety, was in operation from the very commencement of their married life, and continued until its close. It did not find him unprepared. It is remarkable that so early as the year 1816, when I had, I presume, mentioned in writing to him the delicacy of health of the young lady

to whom I was engaged to be married, he wrote thus in answer; and had I shewn him his letter in 1835, or indeed at any later and less romantic period of his life, I feel sure he would have adhered to every word in it, and applied it to his own feelings:—

"One part of your letter did indeed make me very sorry, it is that where you speak of Miss B.'s state of health. I think I can enter into your feelings on that subject; I have often thought why it is that illness attaches us more to people whom we love, and though I cannot analyse it, I feel that it is both a merciful and trying dispensation: merciful, because it makes us more useful to them, and attracts us towards another world; trying, even to heart-breaking, because it gets stronger as hope gets less. But I would not advise any man to encourage it who has not an habitual sense of religion, and dependence upon God. I have often thought how miserable it must have been to heathens to lose a relation, and it must be still worse, methinks, to heathenish Christians. But since we are Christians, I do not think the chance, or even the moral certainty of ill health should be considered as an objection to a marriage well considered in other respects.

"*Jan*$^{ry}$ 9, 1816."

Keble had abundant opportunity of testing the soundness of this opinion in his own married life. As he seldom wrote a letter to me before his marriage which did not contain some words about the varying health of his parents, or sisters; so during

his after life there was seldom one in which that of his wife was not an important topic. Beside all other comforts, one he had in a remarkable degree, in the patience, good spirits, and energy of Mrs. Keble; she bore very trying and long sicknesses not merely with cheerful resignation, but with bright spirits, and when one would have thought her unfit for anything but rest on her sofa, she would be up and at work in or for the parish almost as if she had been in strength and health. It may give some little notion of her in the early part of her married life, if I extract parts of a letter from her to Elisabeth Keble, then at Bisley. It is dated from Hursley, March 9, 1836:—

"My dear Eliz[th],

"Every now and then, when I propose to a gentleman to write a little scrap to you, he says he is going to send you a whole letter; but as even poor Hooker's departure doesn't seem to have made a gap in his occupations, I dare say this intended letter will be some time before it reaches Bisley, so I must say 6 words to you in this. I dare say you are thinking as much about Oxford as we are."

This was the period of the agitation which existed there on the appointment of Dr. Hampden to the Regius Professorship of Divinity:—

"Some of the clergy about here seem to take a real interest in the subject, but those at Winton are not easily moved; at least, I suppose those who are much influenced

by the Bishop do not feel very sure of his concurrence; but perhaps, as Mr. Newman says, the example of Bath and Bristol and other places may give them courage; and if the Bishop knew that the Archbishop really wished for such support, I should hope he would sanction it. John is gone to meet him to-day, and I dare say he will have some talk about it.

"I do not at all like the thoughts of letting him go again by himself to Oxford, but I suppose it must be this time; and to comfort myself, I have been thinking that it would be very nice, (if nothing prevents,) to be there with him when the Prize time comes; he must be there longer then; and if you could get your visit to the Edwards' over, and meet us at Oxford, and come back with us, I think it would do beautifully. I'm afraid the poor Lecture is rather behindhand. There have been so many things just lately to take his thoughts another way; but after the last, which was only just finished in time to be *preached*, and yet turned out so well, I shall not be much in a fidget. The chief vexation is that one can't help him at all.

"By the end of this month I think we shall begin to look very pretty here. Even now there is a delicate tinge of green coming over the underwood and hedges, as I see when I take my walk up and down the south end of the Terrace. All that we have done as yet is the walk under the trees, which Churcher was gravelling yesterday, and which I hope will be in good order by the time you come. We have plans in our head about making flower-beds, and putting in some shrubs, but the ground is too wet to do anything.

"The daily service goes on very quietly and comfortably; the number of persons continues about the same; but to

have this daily sacrifice at all seems every day to be more valuable. I shall be very glad for poor Mr. Newman to have the comfort of John's being in Oxford. He seems very much to need it; and nobody, I suppose, can so entirely sympathize with him both in his distress for the loss, and also in the views and opinions which knit them all three together. I can't help thinking, at least one doesn't know, but that Mr. Froude may in some way or other be of more service now, than if he had been kept here longer.

"Mr. Wilson seems to set in to his work with very good heart, though Mr. Norris of Hackney tried to frighten him by saying, 'Do you know what you are going to undertake —daily services, &c. ?' He has been a good deal about the parish, but he can't do much in the way of reading or writing on account of his eyes. My best love to the children, dear. I shall leave the outside for another hand.

"Dear Elizabeth,

"Your affect^te^ sister, C. K."

Then *John*, later in the day, has taken up the pen and says :—

"Charlotte has just wakened me out of an afternoon's nap to say I must write a line to you dearest Eliz., and I say I have nothing worth writing, but it may be good to have her favourable account of herself confirmed, for she is certainly better and stronger than she was. . . .

"I most wish my lecture was done, it makes me feel so stupid. Your lovingest, J. K."

Let it not be supposed (I add in a parenthesis) that my old friend Mr. Norris was averse from daily services, which from the time he had a Church of his own he constantly celebrated.

It is not waste of time thus to make my readers acquainted with the person whom Keble had chosen for the partner of his life; his was a nature which delighted in sympathy and intimate communion; he had chosen well. Mrs. Keble, without going out of her subordinate place, and in spite of her delicate health, was his very helpful and affectionate fellow-worker, comforter, and support to the end of his days. I need not point out the features of her character in this picture so unconsciously drawn of herself by herself, but I will add a testimony to myself from Dyson, who says, writing to me in October, 1836:—

"At the end of August we paid a visit to Keble at Hursley, where he has a pretty home and garden, and a charming wife, not omitting a most excellent Squire; so that our dear friend has many happy appliances about him with only one great drawback, the delicate state of his wife's health. I find he has advanced higher up the hill of Ecclesiastical Orthodoxy than I have reached as yet. I require more time, being of a sluggish constitution of mind and body. If I had the same purity and singleness of spirit, and something of the same depth of thought and feeling, as he happily has, perhaps I should strive more to keep up with him."

Again he says in February, 1837:—

"Also I have a letter from J. Keble, who says his wife has been attacked by the Influenza, which has thrown her back much, bringing on her cough, &c. This I grieve to

hear, being anxious about her both on her account and his. For bating her ill health, I do not know that our dear friend could have been more happy in his choice in all respects. And indeed this thorn in the side of ill-health has little venom in it, from her sweetness of temper and patience; and may be wanting as a trial to make him more perfect."

In the autumn of the year 1836, Keble was called on (I suppose as the junior Incumbent) to preach in Winchester Cathedral the Visitation Sermon, before Chancellor Dealtry and the clergy of the Archdeaconry; his subject was "Primitive Tradition recognised in Holy Scripture;" it was published "in deference to the wish" of his audience, and was afterwards included in a volume of Academical and Occasional Sermons, which he published at a later period. But it had reached a third edition before that, and he had then subjoined to it an Appendix, and also a reprint of the seventy-eighth Tract for the Times, being principally a Catena Patrum collected as authority for the view he had taken. The sermon seems to me to put the important matter of the true and allowed authority of Tradition in the right light, and to have been a very seasonable contribution to our theological libraries. For himself he said to me:—

"I am glad you do not think I have gone too far in the view I have taken of Tradition. It appears to me such plain hum-drum common sense, that I am sure no one would

think of urging such a truism, if Romanism had not brought it into discredit."

Cornish, through his brother Hubert, had intimated a doubt as to the correctness of his view of Tradition, in answer to which he says :—

"Hubert (who is a good fellow) says I am to tell you the meaning of Tradition, and reconcile myself with my Master, Hooker: to which I answer first he is not my Master, as I have dared to differ from him widely in my Preface; and secondly, if you compare what he says in B. i. c. 13, about Tradition, with the place in B. v. about the Tradition of the Cross, you will see that he does not deny the *principle*, that *if* you could make out such things to be Traditions, you ought to receive them, but only *the fact* that such things are Traditions. In the fact I am at issue with him, and so (among others) is St. Basil; who says some of the chiefest and most universal rules of Christian worship are known by Tradition only without Scripture."

I make a further extract from the same letter, which presents a pleasant picture of the life at the Vicarage at this time, and adds an interesting incident or two on other matters. Dr. Newman will excuse, I think, my introduction of what relates to him. The letter is dated Oct. 16, 1837 :—

"My wife, I am thankful to say, continues on the whole a little stronger then she used to be at Cirencester; but the autumn makes itself felt a little both by her and the trees, gently as it is coming on. Elisabeth is with us, very

comfortably well, keeping up our spirits on the departure of my brother and sister and their three daughters, after a visit of a full month, the first they have ever paid us. It answered remarkably well, all parties enjoying themselves; and Tom seeming quite set up after his trying campaign with the Beggars and Guardians right hand and left at Bisley. Newman came among us for a week when we were all together: I wish you could meet him here some day; I think you will find that his demeanour answers reasonably well to the impression made by his writings and preachings. He has now in hand a work on Justification, of which I have seen a very little; those who know more of it, say that it is as striking or more so than any thing he has yet put out. While he was here we were very busy correcting some sheets of the 'Remains' of dear H. Froude, which N. is bringing out: if my partiality does not deceive me, it will be a most original and interesting book. His Journal has taught me things concerning him, which I never suspected myself, as to the degree of self-denial which he was practising when I was most intimate with him. This encourages one to think that there may be many such, whom one dreams not of. . . . I sent Newman what you said concerning Oxford Statutes, and found that he had been turning his mind to the subject; he has made a copy of the Oriel Statutes, and finds only two things which are not in substance (he thinks) observed; the Provost living with the Fellows, and the Fellows residing. This excepts of course the great deviation common to all the Catholic Foundations: the cessation, i.e. of Prayer for the Founders; of which the more I think of it, the more I regret it, as a most lamentable concession to Ultra Protestant fears and jealousies; nor do I think we shall ever be quite right till it is restored. In the meantime I am for

holding back as much as possible from all State interference; my notion of the Constitution (of course under your correction) being that all such foundations ought only to be controllable by Chancery, and that Parliament has nothing to do with them."

A notion, I may subjoin, in which he was soon to be somewhat rudely corrected; he lived to see the principle insisted on that the Universities and their Colleges were National property, and the consequence followed of course that it was within the competence of Parliament to regulate their Government. And these principles established, I think he would have admitted that on the whole they were respectfully and moderately dealt with by the Oxford University Act of 1854, and the Executive Commission appointed by it. He certainly had no reason to cling with regret to the Government of the Hebdomadal Board. It is easy to form an opinion as to what he would have thought of the measure apparently in contemplation at the time I write. On questions of this kind especially his principles were uncompromising; if a measure offended against what he thought honest, or violated what he thought sacred, good motives in the framers he would not admit as palliatives; nor would he be comforted by an opinion of mine that measures mischievous in their logical consequences were never in the result so mischievous, or beneficial measures so beneficial, as

had been foretold. So he writes playfully to me at an earlier time :—

"Hurrell Froude and I took into our consideration your opinion that 'there are good men of all parties,' and agreed that it is a bad doctrine for these days; the time being come in which, according to John Miller, 'scoundrels must be called scoundrels;' and moreover we have stigmatized the said opinion by the name of the Coleridge Heresy. So hold it any longer at your peril."

I think it fair to set down these which were in truth formed opinions, and not random sayings; but it would be most unfair, if one concluded from them, written or spoken in the freedom of friendly intercourse, that there was anything sour in his spirit, or harsh or narrow in his practice; when you discussed any of these things with him, the discussion was pretty sure to end, not indeed with any insincere concession of what he thought right and true, but in consideration for individuals, and depreciation of himself.

I give, from a letter to myself, dated Hursley, Oct. 23, 1838, an extract more considered, and not unimportant. I had been reading Alexander Knox's Remains, and been much struck by them, and mentioned them to him. He says in the course of a long letter, (and I desire to draw attention to the close of the extract) :—

"As touching Mr. Knox, whom you have been reading, I admire him very much in some respects, and think he

did the world great service by his 'Treatise on the Eucharist;' but I cannot admit his symbolizing with Methodists to be at all Catholic; quite the contrary, for Catholic means, 'according to the rule of the whole uncorrupt Church from the beginning;' and Mr. Knox's admiration of Wesley and Co., was founded first on his own private personal experience, and then justified by his own private personal interpretation of Church History. Surely it was a great fallacy of his, that where he saw the good effect of a thing, the thing itself is to be approved. You know how it issued in the case of his friend Mr. Forster, that he made out Mahometanism to be a kind of Divine dispensation: and in itself surely it is rather an arrogant position in which Mr. K. delighted to imagine himself, as one on the top of a high hill, seeing which way different schools tend—(the school of Primitive Antiquity being but one among many,) and passing judgment upon each how far it is right, and how well it suited its time—himself superior to all, exercising a royal right of eclecticism over all. It does not seem to me to accord very well with the notion of a faith 'once for all delivered to the saints.' I speak the more feelingly because I know I was myself inclined to eclecticism at one time; and if it had not been for my father and my brother, where I should have been now, who can say?"

If it should seem to any enthusiastic admirer of Alexander Knox (and although I believe he is much less read now than he deserves, there may be many still,) that Keble speaks with too great freedom of one so justly remarkable as he was, it should be remembered that he was writing to me whom he was perfectly entitled to advise on such a subject, with

the freedom and unreservedness of friendly correspondence. It was therefore natural to pass by the qualifications which he might have thought it right to express under other circumstances.

My readers will have observed how Keble writes respecting Hurrell Froude and his "Remains;" his death was a heavy blow to him, and no wonder; those who knew him, but were not on terms of intimacy, could not but regard mournfully the end of one so accomplished, so gifted, so good, and so pure; a man of such remarkable promise, worn out in the very prime of life by slow and wasting and long hopeless disease. But it was much more than this with Keble—they were more like elder and younger brothers; reverence in some sort sanctified Froude's love for Keble, and moderated the sallies of his somewhat too quick and defiant temper, and imparted a special diffidence to his opposition in their occasional controversies with each other; while a sort of paternal fondness in Keble gave unusual tenderness to his friendship for Froude, and exaggerated perhaps his admiration for his undoubted gifts of head and heart. And these were greater than mere acquaintances would be aware of; for he did not present the best aspects of himself to common observation.

I must say a word upon the book: it was published in 1838 and 1839 in two Parts, and to each is prefixed a well-considered and able preface, written by Keble; with the exception however as to the second of a few

formal lines at the close, but as to the first, of the portion from p. ix. to p. xv. This last vindicates Froude from the imputation of Romanism, in the sense either of favouring the Roman Catholic Church, or of being disloyal in any true sense to the Anglican, by citations from the "Remains" themselves. These excepted parts are, as I now learn, by Dr. Newman, who was the publisher of the work; Keble, however, shared largely in the preparation, and insisted on partaking of the responsibility. I had the misfortune of giving him pain, not only by differing from him on the subject; but, owing to misinformation, or misapprehension on my part, by what turned out to be a fruitless and ill-timed interference to prevent the publication. I need not now explain how this arose; but I must confess that my opinion remains unchanged. It is a deeply interesting book, not only perfectly harmless now, but capable of instructing and improving those who will read it calmly and considerately; still I think that it was calculated at the time to throw unnecessary difficulties in the way of the Movement; that it tended to prevent a fair consideration of what the movers were attempting, to excite passion, and to encourage a scoffing spirit against them. Some part of the anger and bitterness with which the Ninetieth Tract was afterwards received, may fairly be traced to the feeling created, unjustly indeed, yet not unnaturally, by the publication of the "Remains;" the one seemed

to be the result of the other: and the sequence of the two was held to shew a deliberate hostility to the Anglican, and an undue preference of the Roman Church.

It was in May, 1839, that Keble published his metrical version of the Psalms; he had prepared this some time before, and it lay among his papers; until an intimation reached him that the Bishop of Oxford (Dr. Bagot) would, if it were published, license it formally for use in his diocese. A sanction of this sort he particularly desired; he had determined not to publish it under his own name; and now having this encouragement from the Bishop, under whom, in a certain sense, he considered himself to be as an Oxford Professor, and being also more directly related to the Bishop of Winchester as Vicar of Hursley, he was desirous of the same sanction from him also, and to be allowed to call the work the "Winchester and Oxford Psalter." He accordingly applied, and some delay occurring in the receipt of an answer, he became apprehensive that he might have done what was wrong in making the application. By his desire I wrote to the Bishop, my old and intimate friend. I speak from recollection now only; but I think the delay might have been in part occasioned by his disappointment at the execution of the work, and his consequent unwillingness to connect himself with it so closely as he might seem to do, if he formally licensed its use in his

diocese. He had, however, another ground; for it seemed to him, at least, very doubtful whether he had any authority as diocesan to issue such a licence: and he accordingly contented himself with leaving Keble and any other incumbents in the diocese at liberty to use it at their own discretion without his inquiry or interference.

Keble was content with this, and the version was published, with a dedication to the Bishop of Oxford.

Writing to me on May 1, 1839, he says:—

"I do not the least wonder at the Bishop's or any one else feeling disappointed at the execution of the work. I am sure I should be so most exceedingly, if I could come to it as a reader. The truth is, I really believe it impossible, and intended to be so, for reasons which I shall endeavour to explain in the Preface, if the book ever comes out."

Accordingly in the Preface he says:—

"The Version was undertaken in the first instance with a serious apprehension, which has since grown into a full conviction, that the thing attempted is, strictly speaking, *impossible*."

This Preface is well worth reading, in which he gives the reasons at length for this assertion. Archbishop Howley is said to have pronounced, with his peculiar neatness of expression, a criticism at once conclusive, and yet personally flattering: "Mr. Keble's work has demonstrated the truth of his position."

The general substitution of hymns in the Church

service for metrical versions of the Psalms might have been alone conclusive against the general introduction of this version into our parish churches. But I think in the remark which I have cited from Keble's letter a fallacy exists, which has operated unfairly on the general opinion as to the work; he says, "I should have been exceedingly disappointed myself if I could come to it as *a reader*." Now it seems to me that a version of the Psalms should never be considered as a book of poetry to be *read*, but as a collection of hymns, or sacred songs to be *sung* congregationally; and after satisfaction as to its faithfulness, the only question is whether it is that which lends itself to effective and harmonious congregational singing. It must be familiar to all of us how in some of our grandest oratorios we lose all sense of the tameness or poverty of the verse where it fits itself well to noble music. He who versifies the Psalms, therefore, for choral singing, should have some musical science, and much musical taste. Keble was not well qualified in these respects, nor am I competent to say how far he has succeeded. But I have confidence in his version being faithful, and I think I find it useful to refer to when I want to extract the meaning of an expression in our authorized versions, or to trace the sequence of the argument. I trust the version will not be omitted, though I suppose it may not be largely read, in the complete collection of Keble's "Poetical Works," which is promised us.

This year it was Keble's turn as Poetry Professor to deliver the Crewcian Oration at the Oxford Commemoration; and among the select few on whom it was proposed to confer honorary degrees was William Wordsworth. The Poetry Professor and the Public Orator deliver this Oration in alternate years, but it is the duty of neither, as such, to present for their degrees those distinguished persons on whom they are to be conferred. I believe this office is always performed by the Regius Professor of Civil Law; and certainly Keble did not present the Poet on the occasion in question; as Dr. Wordsworth (who, being a Cambridge man, may well be excused for inaccuracy in such a matter at Oxford) states in his life. But Keble would know of the intention to confer the degree, and it would be easy enough to introduce the incident into the speech which he had to deliver; having the manuscript before me, I see that the passage originally formed part of it. He would gladly embrace the opportunity of paying him honour; he had been for many years an enthusiast in his admiration of the man and the poet; though I believe he was first introduced to him personally at this Commemoration, by the Rev. F. A. Faber, at whose rooms in Magdalen College he met him by invitation. The Oration commences with pointing out a close analogy between the Church and the University as institutions, and after tracing this out in several particulars, notices

a supposed and very important failure of the analogy in respect to the poorer classes, to whom the gates of the latter are not practically open, nor instruction afforded. This failure the orator then proceeds to explain and neutralize so far as he is able, and towards the close he is brought in very natural course to the passage in question: Dr. Wordsworth has printed it in the original. I am tempted to add a poor but tolerably faithful translation:—

"On this also I might insist, that the University, and so Letters themselves, cannot well be without that austere and solid sweetness, with which youth well and wisely spent in poverty is wont to flavour those who are submitted to its training. But I judged, Gentlemen of the University, that I should satisfy, and more than satisfy, what this topic demands, if only I should recall to your recollection him, (specially now as in this honourable circle which surrounds me he is himself present,) who of all poets, and above all has exhibited the manners, the pursuits, and the feelings, religious and traditional, of the poor,—I will not say in a favourable light merely, but in a light which glows with the rays of heaven. To his poetry, therefore, they should, I think, be now referred, who sincerely desire to understand and feel that secret harmonious intimacy which exists between honourable Poverty, and the severer Muses, sublime Philosophy, yea, even our most holy Religion."

Wordsworth was exceedingly gratified by this unexpected tribute, which was received in the crowded Theatre with hearty and general applause, according

well with the universal shout with which his name was received, when announced by the Professor in presenting him.

Dr. Wordsworth well remarks :—

"What a contrast was this to the reception which, a few years before, Mr. Wordsworth had experienced from the most celebrated critics of England, and from the literary world at large."

When the *Prælectiones* were concluded and published, Keble sealed his testimony by dedicating the volume to Wordsworth, with an inscription very beautiful in itself, and peculiarly gratifying to the Poet, as describing very correctly what it had been his object, as a Poet, to accomplish by his writings.

## CHAPTER XII.

1840.—LIBRARY OF THE FATHERS.—CHARLES MARRIOTT. — DR. ARNOLD. — TRACT 90, AND SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS.

PERHAPS I ought to have mentioned earlier an undertaking in which Keble began to be engaged as early as 1838, and to which he attached much importance, the Library of the Fathers. It was this, I think, which first brought publicly into connection the three names which for a long time thenceforward, through good report and evil report, were intimately associated together,—those of Pusey, Keble, and Newman; two of them still survive, of whom it is no part of my present duty, and might be a breach of another, to say more than what is inseparably connected with my memoir of the deceased. All three were of the same College, and though of different standings, had been brother Fellows; they were specially bound together by a common zeal for the Church of England, and a general agreement of belief and opinions.

The undertaking just mentioned was one fruit of this zeal and agreement; they proposed to edit translations of the whole or of selected works of certain of the Fathers who had flourished previously to the division of Christendom into East and West,

and also in certain cases of the original texts. They constituted themselves editors, and made themselves responsible for the selection of the works, and the faithfulness of the translations, and it must be added, for the general management of the whole publication; but they relied for the execution of the parts on the help of a considerable number of gentlemen, whose names appeared either in the prospectus, or in the course of the issue, many of them men of mark, and well known in both Universities. They themselves declined all pecuniary profit.

It is an impediment to the success of all such undertakings almost inseparable from them, the obvious risk that what requires so many hands, and so much time, will never be carried on to completion; the Editors sought to extenuate this as much as possible by allowing subscriptions for separate works, and by making these separate works of convenient and inexpensive magnitude. But they could not foresee, or provide against the calamity of losing the services of one of the most active and able of their own number; or the troubles and differences which were before long to divide the University,—and the Library still remains incomplete,—a disappointment to those interested in possessing it; yet it is still for use very valuable to any one who wishes to read, or consult, some of the most important of the Fathers, especially I mention Chrysostom and Augustine, in the course of his study of the Scriptures. It was scarcely to be expected that the translations in

general, though they might faithfully render the opinions and arguments of Augustine and Chrysostom, should give us to the life the short, close, epigrammatic manner of the former, or the luxuriant eloquence of the latter. Keble was conscious of this; in a letter to me he says:—

"Have you looked into any of our volumes of the Fathers? I am just finishing the Revisal of S. Chrysostom on the 1st Corinthians, which is hardish work. I fear we are too literal, but it is the best extreme."

To which opinion I think all would subscribe.

The loss of one of their own number, to which I have alluded, was supplied by them as well as they were able by the accession of Charles Marriott, also a Fellow of Oriel. I recall the name of a man justly dear to many, and too early taken from us; a man of great learning and ability, but more remarkable for his rare simplicity, zeal, and purity, of a charity in one sense bounded only by his means, in another and higher unbounded. He died in the prime of life, still a Fellow.

Keble was greatly interested in this undertaking, as might be supposed, but, judging only from the initials affixed to the Prefaces, (some of which I may observe in passing have a considerable independent value,) he does not appear to have taken a very active part in it, compared with Mr. Newman, so long as he remained one of the body; or Dr. Pusey, who laboured throughout with his accustomed in-

dustry. His most important contribution, however, has not yet appeared, a translation of S. Irenæus; which, I am told, is now being carried through the press by Mr. Liddon.

In the course of 1839 Cornish had been making a tour in different parts of England, and among other friends had visited Arnold at Foxhow. He must have written to Keble mentioning this. Keble answers him on "Old Christmas Day, as the folks call it," 1840:—

"I am glad of your account of Arnold, which quite agrees with what I had been led to hope. His feelings seem much mitigated towards his old friends; but I wish I could see some fair sign of his taking a better view of great questions. In consequence of your letter I wrote a line to him to-day, with a proof leaf of a new Tract for the Times, in which it came in somehow to find fault with some of his speculations. How he will take it I don't know, but it seemed to me kinder that I should let him know, than that he should light upon it in print without notice. It does not name him, nor is it, I hope, very severe."

On St. Mark's Day following he had to write again to Cornish upon the death of his youngest sister, an event which for particular reasons moved him very tenderly; in the course of his note he says:—

"One surely feels more and more the privilege of being allowed to remember one's departed friends in private prayer, and secretly at the altar."

And at the close he adds :—

"I have had a very kind and comfortable Easter Letter from Arnold."

I find in a letter from Arnold to me, written soon after, the following passage :—

"I have heard from old Keble, to whom I could not help writing in the hope of getting some friendly communication with him once again. And his answer was such as to make me heartily glad that I had written to him."

In the summer of this year Mrs. Keble, who had again been very unwell, was so far recovered as to be able to accompany him in a tour which he made in North Wales; it was made indeed in great measure to give her change of scene and sea air, her great specific. He wrote to me from Barmouth, where they were halting in a lodging on the level of the sea, and with great convenience for boating, the best of exercises for her. He was at the time helping Mrs. Davison, then a widow, in publishing the scattered *opuscula* of her deceased husband, and he wrote to me for some help. This subject was renewed in a letter which I received from him early in December of the same year, from which I must make some extracts on two or three different subjects. Mrs. Keble had again become ill, and was very slowly recovering when he wrote. After describing this illness, he goes on :—

"I was thinking of writing to you when your letter came,

for Heathcote told me he had heard not a good account of Mary."

She was his godchild, and he seldom failed to mention her with affectionate interest in his letters :—

"He did not say any thing of your wife being unwell. I trust both are now better, and that you are yourself enabled to nurse your winter cough a little. I expected to hear you were at Oxford, from what John said, when I just hailed him there; and I very much regretted at the time that I had not paid my visit one week later; it would have been a great and peculiar pleasure to walk about with you, and gaze on some of the old places. I missed seeing M. Arnold, (who was also his godchild,) but had a very kind note from him, in answer to one that I sent. I live in hopes of coming into full communication with Rugby again one of these days. As to dear old Dyson, I hear from him to-day an improved account, both of himself and of his two wives.

"I am rather busy just now, having sent a bundle of papers to the Tract Press on the Mysticism of the Fathers, a subject on which I feel that I can only just make a beginning; but if one can draw attention, I shall be satisfied. Moreover, we are just putting the last hand to the volume of Davison's 'Remains.' (By-the-bye, I never thanked you for your kindness in that matter.) I am just now puzzling myself how, in the quietest and best way, to counteract the ill and false impression which the Bishop of Llandaff and poor Lord Dudley have been spreading abroad concerning his conversation. Mr. Markland kindly got Murray's leave to reprint the articles from the Q. R., and he has also procured the suppression of the unworthy sentences in the new Edition of Lord Dudley's Letters. . . . I love to think of your little Church, and it shall go hard, but I offer a small

trifle, (I fear very small,) to it, but I shall know better after Christmas."

It is not material now to ascertain what "the unworthy sentences" were to which Keble refers, but they undoubtedly had given Mrs. Davison much pain, and he was very sensitive in regard to Davison. There certainly was in Davison's manner and talk something not exactly finical, yet over precise, and constrained, something of a want of ease and naturalness, which, in the freedom of private correspondence, might provoke a sarcastic remark from Lord Dudley; and there was a difference moreover in the natures of Davison and the Bishop, which might make the latter, good-natured as he was, and certainly esteeming the former highly, somewhat less careful than he might have been in regard to such passages as Keble regretted.

My principal object, however, in printing these extracts, was to give my readers a glimpse in passing of the real state of feeling which existed between my two dear friends; both of whom in a true sense I may call great men.

There is a very interesting letter from Arnold to myself, printed in the second volume of his Life by Dr. Stanley, which, in tracing the formation of his opinions and character, shews what they were during the greater part of his residence at Oxford; then and there it was that the intimate friendship between him and Keble commenced; and this ex-

plains what might seem at first a difficulty, how they became so closely united. Radical differences of opinion subsequently arising upon subjects which each held to be of vital importance, had interrupted their intimate intercourse, and that intercourse had been too intimate, and their love for each other too deep, to admit of their putting themselves on the footing of mere friendly acquaintance. It was to be expected, too, that as each advanced, (and each certainly did advance,) farther and farther in his own line, the difference between them would become wider, and the condemnation, by each, of the other's opinions, more intense. If Keble's language respecting Arnold had been occasionally stronger than that of Arnold respecting Keble, (and I really do not think it was,) it would have been no more than was to be expected; for in his view the difference was on things sacred, his nature was very sensitive, and his attention was not, like Arnold's, occupied on a variety of subjects, a circumstance of course tending to diminish its intensity on any one. But all the time in the hearts of both the early love remained ineradicable; these extracts are little indications of that, of which I can speak beside from personal knowledge; and I feel sure that had it not pleased God to take one away in the very prime of his life, they would have learned to look through their differences, and to have set against each other's supposed errors that greatness

of mind, goodness of intention, and loving-heartedness which they could not but recognise in each other; each might have admitted a salutary distrust of his own very strong opinions, and indulged finally in what both so longed for, their old affection for and admiration of each other. If this be a piece of what Keble and Froude called the Coleridge Heresy, I hope it will be forgiven.

It appears in the course of these extracts that Keble was not in 1840 at all contemplating what was so soon to burst out at Oxford in respect of the Tracts. He was evidently intending to finish the essay which he had commenced in the 89th, when the publication of the celebrated 90th brought the whole series to an abrupt termination. The part which Keble took as to the tract itself, and the proceedings which followed, make it unfitting for me, however much I might wish it, wholly to pass over these transactions in silence.

The Tract is dated "The Feast of the Conversion of S. Paul, 1841;" shortly after appeared what has since been called the Letter of the Four Tutors reflecting upon it, addressed to the Editor of the Tracts for the Times, and requesting him to make known the name of the writer of the Tract. Mr. Newman answered them at once, and his letter professed at least to remove one principal ground on which the censure in their's was rested; he also commenced immediately the preparation of a Letter

to Dr. Jelf, in explanation and justification of the Tract. But both of these measures might for any immediate purpose have been spared, so rapid were the proceedings of the Hebdomadal Board. The Letter of the Tutors was published, I believe, on a Monday; it was laid before the Board, with the Tract, on Wednesday; a censure was agreed to on the Friday, and on the following Monday in form pronounced and published. In the meantime Keble had communicated to the Vice-Chancellor that he was responsible for the Tract, having seen it in type, agreed to it, and desired it to be published. Dr. Pusey had written to the same effect. Mr. Newman had applied for a delay of twelve hours, that he might complete the defence he was preparing in his Letter to Dr. Jelf; which in point of fact issued from the press on the Tuesday, the very day after the publication of the censure.

These are the facts relating to the Tutors' Letter, and the censure of the Hebdomadal Board; but it will be convenient for the right understanding of their character, and the part which Keble took, if at the cost of anticipating events I add a few more particulars. Keble, as I have said, had at once, and before the censure was determined on, communicated to the Vice-Chancellor, that he held himself to be a sharer in the responsibility for publishing the Tract; and he was by no means satisfied that the whole blame, whether deserved or not, should rest

on Mr. Newman's shoulders. He accordingly prepared and sent to me a letter, with a request which it may be as well to give in his own words :—

"HURSLEY,
"*E. Tuesday*, 1841.

"I AM going to make a request, quite depending on your declining it, if it is unpleasant to you, with or without giving any reason. It is that you will let your name be inserted in the blank of the title-page of the pamphlet whereof I send you a proof. You will see that it is not to be published, but only printed, and some copies sent to those whom it is most supposed to concern. . . . . You see I am a good deal concerned in this matter, and have all along felt as if I was doing wrong in not taking my share of the annoyance ; and I thought if one could calmly put one's case before Archdeacons, and those sort of people, which this mode of printing without publishing enables one to do, some might be less likely to commit themselves to what they would be sorry for by and by."

I did not agree in all respects with the course which had been pursued ; nor indeed had I knowledge enough of the whole series of the Tracts to pronounce an opinion upon them. But I did not think either of these circumstances sufficient to warrant me in refusing Keble's request ; the granting such a request does not seem to me to import entire assent to all which the letter may contain. Accordingly, the Letter was printed addressed to myself, and although not published until 1865, or 1866, it was largely distributed in the course of the con-

flicts which disturbed the University in the three or four years immediately following the printing.

After stating as one motive for writing it, the personal one, "that he is himself responsible, as far as any one besides the actual writer can be, for the Tract on which so severe a condemnation has lately been pronounced by the Heads of Houses at Oxford, having seen it in proof and strongly recommended its publication," Keble goes on to mention a few instances, as examples only, of the need there was for some explanation of expressions in certain of the Articles; and then in the two following paragraphs he states what he took to be the object and justification of the Tract:—

"On all these and similar points explanations had been given in various works, and it seemed desirable to collect them in one as a kind of manual to assist in what was believed to be the true legitimate catholic exposition of the Articles, whereby the scruples which were known to exist, and other similar ones, which may be expected to arise from time to time, in the interpretation of them as of other formularies, might be removed, or allayed, and our adherence to primitive antiquity, so far, thoroughly reconciled with our allegiance to the Anglican Church.

"Looking in another direction, one seemed to perceive an additional call for some brief and popular treatise to the same effect. From various quarters the cry of insincerity has been of late more and more loudly raised against those, who, subscribing these Articles, professed uncompromising reverence for the Ancient Church; and it was

supposed neither unreasonable nor uncharitable to put within the reach of persons who might find something plausible in such an outcry, the true account of the several points of detail, which at first sight would naturally tell in its favour."

The whole letter is carefully and ably written, very temperate in language, and charitable in spirit, its argument more easily brushed away with a contemptuous word, than answered point by point. It was, I believe, pretty largely circulated, though with little immediate success; three or four years, dreary years as regarded Oxford, of repeated conflicts ensued, in which those whom, for want of a better name, I call the High Church Party, fared but ill against the bitter hostility and concentrated vigour of their opponents. Among other fields, on which the battle was fought, was the Poetry Professorship, the chair of which, in 1841, Keble ceased to fill, and was extremely anxious that his friend the late Isaac Williams should succeed to it. In more peaceful times it would have seemed a matter of course to elect him, at least as against his successful opponent; but he was known or believed to have contributed to the Tracts, and the prejudice created by this circumstance prevailed. At length the contest was in some sort brought to a head by the announcement of an intention on the part of the Hebdomadal Board to submit to Convocation a new test as to the XXXIX Articles, in the form of a declaration to be made

before subscription, of the sense in which the subscriber was about to make it; strange to say this was to be the sense in which he should believe them to have been originally published, *and to be now proposed;* the identity of the two being, I suppose, in all cases assumed. Upon this issue the numbers on either side were preparing to be mustered; and whether the objections appeared on consideration to be too many, and too serious, or the prospects of success too uncertain, this was suddenly withdrawn; and not long afterward, with only eight days' notice, a statute was propounded to Convocation in substance, if not in terms, the same as the Censure of 1841, including however the defenders as well as the authors of Tract 90. An eye-witness has described to me the scene which the Theatre displayed, where, by reason of the numbers assembled, the Convocation was held, when the sense of the House was to be taken. The great area and the gallery were crowded, those who filled them much excited, yet all in suspense; for a rumour had spread abroad that the Proctors might perhaps intercede by a veto; but few, if any, knew what their intention really was. The *Placetne vobis* was at length put, and then in a still silence which at once pervaded the whole assembly these two officers rose from their seats, and the Senior declared *Nobis Procuratoribus non placet.* And so the test fell; the Proctors, who had wisely exercised their prerogative power, quitted office in a few

weeks, and the measure might have been renewed; but counsels more wise and perhaps more generous prevailed; and happily it was heard of no more.

This narrative of the leading facts, as relating to Keble, has run to greater length than I anticipated, but it will still be proper to subjoin one or two general remarks. It was Mr. Benson, who had preached and afterwards published some able sermons on the controversy, in the Temple Church, who gave the authors and favourers of the Tracts the perfectly inoffensive name of Tractarians. In the sense of entire agreement with them I never was a Tractarian; but I have already said how much upon the whole I think we owe to them; what I now proceed to say will be found, I hope, if not entirely agreeable to either party, yet not partial, nor such as ought justly to give offence.

There is no evidence of indirect motive, or want of perfect honesty of purpose, in either party in the commencement of the dispute. From the beginning to the end the Editors seem to me to have been actuated by the purest principles; they were labouring, as they believed, in support of the Church to which they belonged; they sought to elevate and purify the principles and practices of her children, clerical and lay; of course according to their belief of what those, rightly understood, were and should be, — but still in perfect loyalty to her. But this necessarily called on them to pursue a course which

must wound the honest and sound convictions of many, and the strong prejudices of more, and which must condemn the indefensible habits and practices of not a few; they were therefore bound to exercise in an especial degree the virtue of Christian prudence, if only as a necessary condition of success. I own I think that the 90th Tract, (to go no farther,) failed in this respect; and that what ensued upon it might to some extent have been foreseen. It is true that there is much justice and much reasoning not easily answered in the defences and explanations which were then and have been more recently put forth in its behalf; but it must be remembered that it came after a number of essays, some at least, probably not a few, of which had tended to give offence and excite suspicion. And it is strange that it should have been apparently forgotten that the feeling which it was likely to rouse, was just that of which the English mind is most acutely susceptible, and under which, when excited, it is most indiscriminate and bitter. It is true that it is a prejudice, and for Anglicans especially the silliest and most suicidal prejudice, to confound the Ancient Church with the Roman Catholic; Keble read the Tract, as it was written, with other lights, and after a long education of the mind to discriminate between the two; but it was not to be published for such as he; and when it came before prejudiced or careless minds, it was calculated to create the impression that after all the object of the writer

was to lead men unawares to Romanism; and they who thought this would naturally think him dishonest; while men neither prejudiced nor careless might fairly object to a publication which they believed to have that tendency, though, strictly speaking, not by his intention. It is not of course for me to say how it might have been written, and when I consider from what a clear thinker and perfect master of language it proceeded, I do not acquit myself of presumption in venturing to express my opinion that, with proper guards and limitations carefully and avowedly set forth, the legitimate end might have been gained, a useful element imported into our theology, and the great offence which it gave avoided. If this were impossible, the serious question arises, should the Tract ever have been issued?

To this extent, then, the Editors seem to me to have been blameable; they had made what lawyers would call at least a *primâ facie* case against themselves; but were they treated properly? that is, with strict justice; even if a tender consideration was not to be had for them?

I consider the Letter of the Four Tutors as of no other weight than as the accusation; or, to speak again in the language of a lawyer, the indictment preferred by four individuals, acting unofficially, but holding such offices in their Colleges as justified their interference. The Hebdomadal Board was substantially a Court before which this indictment was

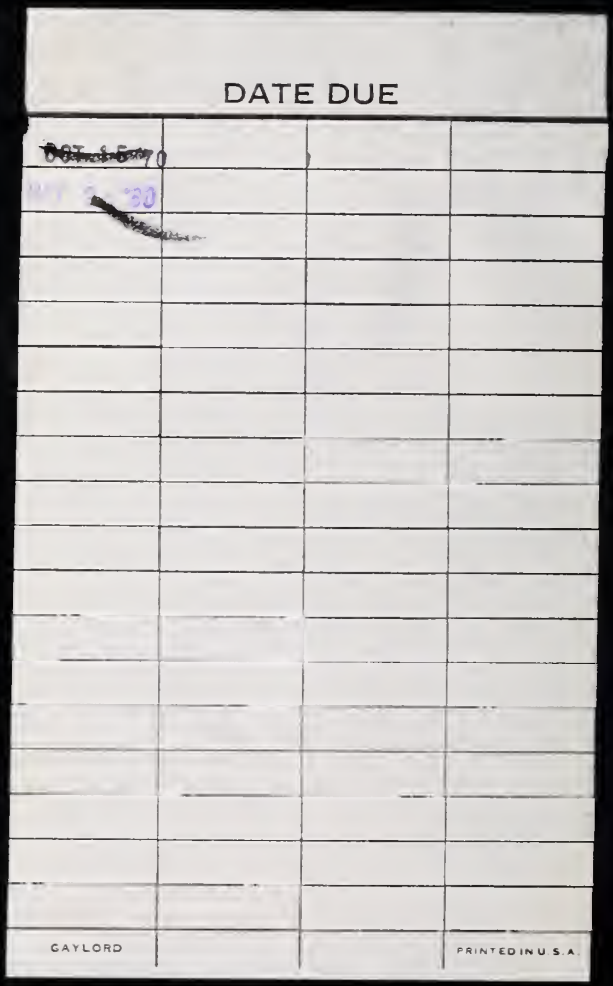
brought for trial. We all know to what any person accused before any judge is entitled; to all this the Editors were of course entitled. Here, when the Letter and the Tract were laid before the Board, it had both the charge and the evidence offered in support of it, and no more. It may be taken that it was not the usual course in such a case to summon the party, or even to give him any notice of what was impending, and therefore, however strange such a practice may be, it cannot fairly be said that any *especial* unfairness is to be complained of for the want of these. But the Board knew and were indeed directly informed that three individuals, among the most eminent in the University, and most blameless in character, were substantially the persons to be affected by their decree; nor could the Board be ignorant how heavy was the blow which it proposed to strike by its sentence. The barest justice therefore required, that if any one of them desired to be heard in explanation or mitigation of the charge, reasonable time should have been afforded for the purpose; the more plain the case, the stronger seemingly the evidence, the more imperative in a judicial proceeding was this duty. One can hardly believe that five days only elapsed from the commencement of the proceeding to the publication of the sentence; and twelve hours of delay were respectfully solicited for the defence and refused; on the sixth day the defence appeared. It is obvi-

ously quite immaterial to consider whether that defence would have availed, or ought to have availed; a judgment so pronounced could have no moral weight. The members of the Board must have been familiar with and should have remembered the weighty lines of the Roman Tragedian :—

> "Qui statuit aliquid parte inauditâ alterâ,
> Æquum licet statuerit, haud æquus fuit."

But from judges they had unfortunately made themselves parties; and it was impossible after this that in the course of the subsequent proceedings in the progress of the controversy, they could be looked up to as just or impartial. In proportion to the goodness of their cause, (and no doubt they believed it to be good,) it was a great opportunity lost. The subsequently proposed statute was a fitting sequel, the same indecent haste prevailed, and the strong measure of the veto was provoked and justified.

It has been said that the proceeding was not judicial, that the sentence was against no person; this seems to me mere trifling with common sense; they who pronounced it must have known that through the Tract they were striking at the author and defenders; and that it was only as it affected them the sentence could have any meaning or weight. The consequences of it were indeed weighty, but with these I have now no concern.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